

Ripples

from the Community Circle Players at Riverwalk Theatre

Season 34 • Number 4
November/December, 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

Arnold Lobel's beloved children's book, *A Year with Frog and Toad* arrives on our Riverwalk main stage December 8 for nine performances. This whimsical family musical tells the story of two best friends: the cheerful Frog, and curmudgeonly Toad. The musical follows them through four colorful seasons, from hibernation to hibernation.

Frog and Toad—along with their playful, quirky friends Snail, Turtle, the Birds, and more — have many adventures, from rushing down a snowy hill

in a runaway sled, to an encounter with Large and Terrible Frog to baking cookies, cookies, cookies.

In Riverwalk Theatre's version, brothers Connor Kelly and Quinn Kelly play the Frog and Toad. "Although we've been in other plays together," said Connor, "this is the first time we have played opposite each other in leading roles." "We're having a great time playing off each other," added Quinn.

Director Tom Ferris, Musical Director Kait Wilson and Choreographer Fran Ludington have put together a fast-paced production that will entertain the whole family. Children and adults alike will relish the joyful vignettes of *A Year with Frog and Toad*, which feature catchy tunes, funny dialogue, energetic dancing and bright, memorable characters.

Riverwalk Theatre teams up with Lansing Reading is Fundamental (RIF) for a special performance on Wednesday, December 14 at 7 pm. "We're thrilled to be working with RIF again," said Ferris. "We are pleased to help them in their mission of motivating all children to discover the joy of reading which will then evolve into lifetime personal reading habits. Riverwalk Theatre supports this mission by providing opportunities for children



FROG AND TOAD Hop onto Riverwalk's Stage December 8

Brothers Connor (L) and Quinn Kelly costar for the first time.

PHOTO BY WWW.ARNIKO.COM

(and adults) to see the books they read come to life on our stage." Following the performance every child under 18 in attendance will be able to choose a RIF book to take home.

Riverwalk Theatre is also partnering with Preuss Pets to support the Panamanian Golden Frog Project. Sean Murphy will attend the Wednesday, December 14 RIF performance, and the Sunday, December 11 and 18 performances to present the education ambassador animals from Preuss Pets. The audience will have the opportunity to interact with their 80-year-old South American Red-Footed Tortoise. Sean will also present some information about Project Golden Frog and why the project exists to preserve the culturally significant golden frog of Panama as a flagship species for amphibian decline issues worldwide.

Frog and Toad performances are December 8-11, 14*-18. Tickets may be purchased at www.riverwalktheatre.com/box-office or by calling (517) 482-5700.

*Tickets for the Wednesday, December 14, 7 pm performance may be purchased from RIF by calling (517) 755-4966.

WHAT'S ON AT RIVERWALK

🎵 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 December 18-19 - Sun/Mon, 7pm - **AUDITIONS for KINKY BOOTS**, **remaining roles**, Lola/Simon & Angels cast earlier - directed by Kelly Stuiblé

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

A February 19-20 - Sun/Mon, 7pm - **AUDITIONS for STEEL MAGNOLIAS**, Directed by Meg Woolsey

🎵 March 2-12 - **KINKY BOOTS** - Musical by Harvey Fierstein, Music by Cyndi Lauper, Directed by Kelly Stuiblé Clark - Main Stage

🎭 April 13-23 - **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** - Drama by Robert Harling, Directed by Meg Woolsey - 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

Fabulation or the Re-Education of Undine...

...was a fantastic tale about a powerful, professional, African American woman who was living her best life until it all came tumbling down. Undine Barnes Calles, played by the extremely talented Vanessa Mazhangara, captured the audience immediately by displaying her confidence and wielding her power over her assistant Stephie, played by Jillian Tosolt. Undine knew exactly what she wanted and how to get it — until she discovered her husband Herve, played by charismatic, smooth, and debonair Lorenzo Lopez, had stolen ALL her hard-earned money.

This sudden change of fortune forced Undine to return to Brooklyn where she had grown up in the Walt Whitman projects. Once home, she found it difficult to reconnect with her family and friends because she had rejected their lifestyle to pursue her dreams of fabulosity.

Undine, pregnant, broke, and living back with her parents, was desperate to regain her sense of well-being and worked hard to figure out what was next. She even sought guidance from a Yoruba Priest, hoping he could tell her if she would regain her fortune.

It is hard to believe that *Fabulation* was Director Rose Jangmi Cooper's first full-stage production. Cooper's choice of a mod-

est stage that easily transformed from business office to a doctor's office and even a jail cell was flawless. A large projection screen helped with scene transitions. The set was simplistic. Still, Cooper did not miss a beat with the everyday details down to the repurposed Crown Royal bag.

The 11-member cast tackled 32 roles with ease and precision. The ensemble was truly dynamic: "Guy" played by Wulf Hogan, "Mother" played by Timetra Horton, "Father" played by Julian Van Dyke, the hilarious "Grandma"



Top: Rose Jangmi Cooper;
center L to R: Vanessa
Mazhangara, Janell Hall;
Julian Van Dyke
PHOTO BY WWW.ARNIKO.COM



Wulf Hogan and Vanessa Mazhangara
PHOTO BY WWW.ARNIKO.COM

played by Janell Hall, "Rapper/Flow" (Norrlyn-Michael Allen), "Allison" (Nykieria Blocker), "Doctor" (Teriah Nicole), and "Priest" (Jordan Taylor).

Ashley Hampton, dubbed "Costume Fabulator," did a great job and we could tell she had fun selecting the right wardrobe. This show was a hit on stage and backstage with experienced crew: Diane Cooke (Stage Manager), Tom Ferris (Set Design), Michelle Harvey-Hill (Projector Tech), Clint Hoagland (Soundscaper), Bernie Lucas (Set and Props Wrangler), Scott Pohl (Publicity/Engagement Rep), Greg Pratt (Light Tech), Maureen Sawdon (Assistant Director) and Steve Vangel (Light Design).

This play lived up to its name. It was a creation of Fabulation.

Gay Oliver



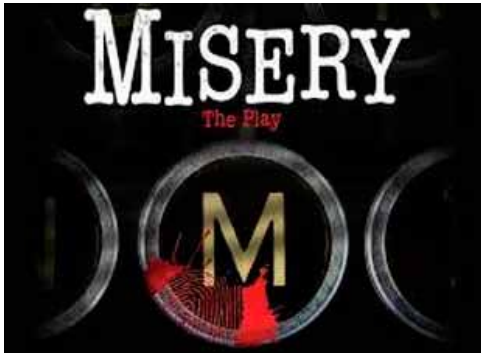
Emerging Playwrights is a play-writing competition sponsored by Riverwalk Theatre. The competition is open to **high school students** in Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties.

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.

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



A U D I T I O N S



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

Directed by Ayden Soupal

Audition dates: Sun. & Mon., Dec. 11-12, 7 pm

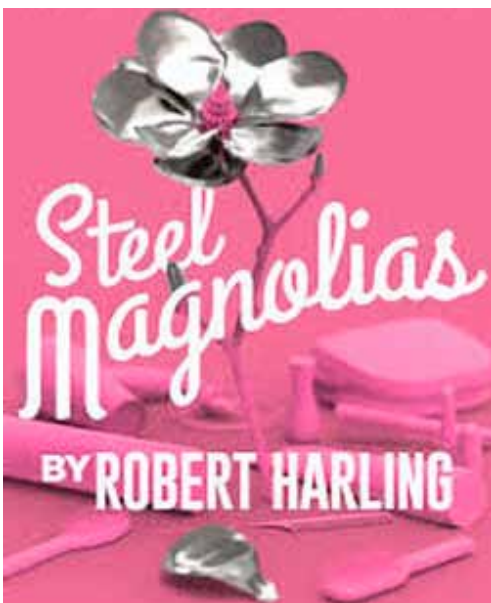
Shows: Feb. 9-19, 2022

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



Drama by Robert Harling

Directed by Meghan Eldred-Woolsey

Audition dates: Sunday & Monday, February 19 & 20, 2023, at 7 pm

Shows: April 13-16 & 20-23, 2023 on the Black Box Stage

The action is set in Truvy’s beauty salon in Chinquapin, Louisiana, where all the ladies who are “anybody” come to have their hair done. Helped by her eager new assistant, Annelle, the outspoken, wise-cracking Truvy dispenses shampoos and free advice to the town’s rich curmudgeon, Ouiser; an eccentric millionaire, Miss Clairee, who has a raging sweet tooth; and the local social leader, M’Lynn, whose daughter, Shelby, is about to marry a “good ole boy.”

Filled with hilarious repartee and not a few acerbic but humorously revealing verbal collisions, the play moves toward tragedy in the second act. The sudden realization of their mortality impacts all, but also draws on the underlying steely strength — and love—which give the play, and its characters, the special quality to make them truly touching, funny and marvelously amiable company in good times and bad.

Truvy Jones - (female 40-50) Owner of a small town beauty salon. She knows everyone’s business and shares it with anyone who will listen. Southern Belle.

M’Lynn Eatenton - (female 50-60) Mother of Shelby. She is overprotective at times. A busy woman who worries for her friends and family.

Annelle Dupuy-Desoto - (female 20-30) Very shy 20-year-old hair-dresser. She goes from a very soft-spoken person to a bible-loving Christian with her heart on her sleeve.

Shelby Eatenton-Latcherie - (female 20-30) 25-year-old diabetic. Prettiest girl in town, and loved by all. Has a close, but sometimes strained relationship with her mother.

Clairee Belcher - (female 60s) Widow of the former mayor. She is wealthy and knows everyone’s business. She is the sarcastic member of the group, poking fun at the little things others cry over.

Ouiser Boudreaux - (female 60s) A wealthy biddy. She is a loveably miserable lady with a unique personality and sense of humor.

Come prepared to read from the script. Perusal scripts are available: RWT@Riverwalktheatre.com

MEMBERSHIP

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 and 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.

PERUSAL SCRIPTS for all shows are available at the Riverwalk office, Tuesday - Friday, 10 am - 5:00 pm. Call 517-482-5700 to check availability: rwt@RiverwalkTheatre.com audition forms are available online at www.riverwalktheatre.com/auditions.html

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 Update

Greetings and warmth to RWT friends near and far this December from myself and the Riverwalk Board of Directors. I hope your holidays are off to a lovely start and you can find time for rest and relaxation amid the chaos this season can bring.

I'd like to provide a few recent updates and keep you apprised of some changes coming down the pipeline. As you may have heard, *masks are now optional for everyone in our building. Thursday night performances will still be sold at half capacity with socially distanced seating, with audience masks required Thursdays only.* Volunteers are no longer required to be vaccinated in order to participate in RWT activities. We still encourage masking as practicable due to the intimate nature of our theatre. More information can be found at our website. This policy took effect Nov. 1, 2022, and the first performance it affects is *A Year with Frog and Toad*, on our Rotary main stage, Dec. 8-11 and 15-18.

At the November 16 meeting, the Board of Directors approved a comprehensive five-year strategic plan for the theatre which touches all areas, including fundraising; implementing a new sound system; recruiting and retaining new tech volunteers; community outreach, engaging with, and welcoming new groups of people into our theatre community; and beyond.

We'll be soliciting assistance from our amazing members and individuals across the community to sit on work groups, help with projects, or give input to our plan in other meaningful ways. Stay tuned — we'll be putting out the call for help soon, and we may contact some of you subject-matter experts directly. Once the plan is made public, you can offer your



interest, skills, and time to certain projects by contacting one of the Executive Officers or Mike Siracuse (rwt@riverwalktheatre.com). Thank you to RWT President Brian Farnham for leading this effort and to Tom Ferris, Leroy Cupp, Joe Dickson, Liane Zimny, and the Board for making the plan a reality. Last but not least, huge thanks to Theatre Manager Mike Siracuse for his day-to-day efforts and guidance, and for helping keep RWT afloat. This plan will ensure the longevity of our beloved theatre.

A few weeks ago, you should have received—either electronically or by mail—a letter from President Brian Farnham with ideas to keep Riverwalk at the forefront of your holiday giving plans this season. Please remember that we cannot operate on ticket sales alone. We rely on various monetary revenues to keep our lights on and pay our staff at a bare minimum, let alone put on productions, repair and maintain equipment, and do all the other things we need to do. Our main source of revenue is membership and donations. Please be a part of that this holiday season and throughout the year. Your generosity does not go unnoticed, and we are making plans now to recognize this generosity even more in the coming years.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone on the Board of Directors or the Executive leadership listed on this page. (Mike can get in touch with any of us, if you don't know where to start). I love hearing from you and aim to be as accessible as possible; please say hi the next time you see me around our theatre! Wishing you a joyous and restful holiday season, my Riverwalk family.

Warmly,
 Kate Clark, Riverwalk VP Administration

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- Bookmark this site—you must shop at smile.amazon.com to get the donation

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pop up to ask you what organization you want your donation to go to. No other information is requested. **Be sure to select Community Circle Players, Inc.** which, as you probably know, is Riverwalk Theatre's official name. They will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.

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