

THE LOOP

- February 2011 -

Standing O Productions ...where life imitates art

Our Mission Statement:

Standing O is a risk-taking theatre company dedicated to presenting lesser-known masterpieces paired with area premieres to engage the community and inspire discussion.

Dear Friends of Standing O Productions,

*This missive carries all of our best wishes to you for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. This is a time for reflection, as well as a time for looking forward to new and exciting ventures. 2010 brought many exhilarating projects to the Standing O stage: from musical theatre to edgy drama, from improv to concerts and cabaret, we have continued to embrace our mission of bringing risk-taking entertainment to the little black box theatre at the Chesapeake Academy. We are certain that our upcoming production of Terence Rattigan's *After the Dance* will be no exception. Standing O is delighted to welcome seasoned director, Carol Youmans, in her first production for us. We are also thrilled with the cast she has chosen for the U.S. premiere of this wonderful play, which includes some Standing O favorites, as well as some new faces. As always, we thank you for your support, and we look forward to seeing you at Standing O!*

*Yours,
Debbie Barber-Eaton*

Standing O Productions presents the U.S. PREMIERE of Terence Rattigan's *After The Dance*

"The growing shadow behind the glittering light has never been so trenchantly and movingly explored...a quiet masterpiece."



After the Dance

Our 2011 Season kicks off with the U.S. Premiere of Terence Rattigan's lost masterpiece, *After the Dance*. Director Carol Youmans leads an all-star cast of some of Standing O's favorite performers, as well as a host of talented newcomers to the company. Don't miss this poignant play, which, though written over seventy years ago, is just as relevant and moving today.

The Gist

What: *After The Dance*

When: Friday, 2/4 - 8 PM
Saturdays, 2/5 & 2/12 - 8 PM
Sunday, 2/6 - 2 PM
Thursday, 2/10 - 8 PM

Where: **Chesapeake Academy
Black Box Theatre**
1185 B & A Blvd. Arnold, MD.

Who: Nick Beschen, Ron Giddings,
Travis Hurley, Christina Enoch
Kemmerer, Molly Phillips, Zarah
Rautell, Kathleen Ruttum, Jordan
Silver, Alicia B. Sweeney, Fred
Taylor, David Thompson, and
Kevin Wallace.
Directed by Carol Youmans

Cost: \$18 (Adults)/\$15 (Students,
Teachers, Seniors 65+, Military)

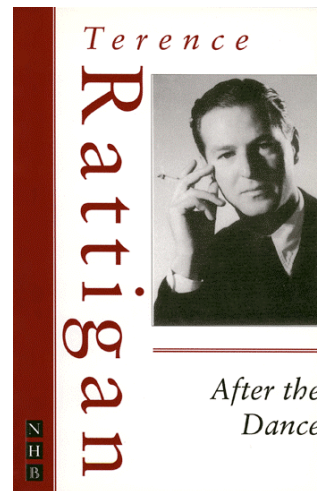
Dramaturgically Speaking...

After the Dance, Terence Rattigan's second play, was written in 1939. He was 28 and had enjoyed a great success and long runs with his first hit, *French Without Tears* in 1936. *After the Dance* closed after just 60 performances despite critical and popular acclaim. Its story about the aging "bright young things" drinking and dancing to escape their responsibilities lost its appeal when England declared war on Germany just two months after its opening. However, the richness of its combination of social satire and emotional truth makes its return a rewarding experience for both company and audiences.

Terence Rattigan was a master at creating the

well-made play, a now outmoded tradition which had come out of Aristotle and flourished in French theater in the 19th and 20th centuries, wherein a secret drove the movement of the plot until it culminated in a climatic revelation and resolution at the play's end. The story of Joan and David Scott-Fowler and their glittering crowd of aging "bright young things" is compelling. The social satire that Rattigan presents is amusing and we are engaged by the clash of the spoiled alcoholic partiers, running away from the responsibilities of the real world on the brink of war, and the younger people just out of college who are trying to face reality squarely and accomplish something.

But Rattigan attacks more than the frivolity of these lives, he shows what happens when people repress their true feelings until they are destroyed by them. The secret that drives *After the Dance* is the fact that Joan loves her husband and as we watch the play unfold, we are treated to Rattigan's peerless mastery of the well-made play – as a vehicle for fierce social criticism, and to show the quiet horror of a breaking heart.



The Artist's Corner Featuring Molly Phillips & Alicia B. Sweeney

This edition of The Artist's Corner features two dear friends who will be appearing together in the upcoming production of *After the Dance*. Many of you may remember the talented Alicia Sweeney on stage in *On the 20th Century*, *Counting the Ways*, and *Mr. Marmalade*, as well as a number of concerts and her very own (hugely successful cabaret). Well, the theatre bug is contagious, and now Molly's "bucket list" item: "To act in a play" is finally ready to be checked off the list.

How did the two of you become friends?

MOLLY: Alicia and I met about 10-12 years ago while working at Saks Fifth Ave together. Funny thing is, cosmetics, being the catty little group that it *can* sometimes be, the girls in the department warned me of the new girl-well I pushed all of that aside and found that

she was/is a fantastic person and friend-did I mention hilarious? We've been friends ever since.

ALICIA: Molly was instructed to "hate me." Thankfully, she is woman who can think for herself and form her own opinions. We bonded over work, wine, and whatever! Over the years we have faced what life has thrown us with a healthy dose of humor (and wine - did I mention wine?)

Molly, how did you end up working on After the Dance?

MOLLY: I believe I first heard of Moya Lexington while at Gordon Biersch happy hour a year and a half ago. Ron told me that he had the perfect role for me! I was ecstatic! I had been telling Ron that I was very interested in even the smallest of roles to get involved in community theatre. When the role and play happened, I read up on Moya and auditioned.

ALICIA: Yes! Molly had said that she always wanted to do a show and I knew that something would come along eventually that would be perfect for her and - go figure - her first opportunity to perform, and she is in a U.S. Premiere - it's all down hill from here.

How has it been to work together on the show?



MOLLY: It's been great to work with Alicia as well as some of my other friends, Ron and Dave. It's always great to see your friends in a different light. I have also really enjoyed getting to know some people that I have seen in other theatrical pieces better

(that's you, Christina) and meeting new people as I am still sorta new to Annapolis.

ALICIA: It's always wonderful to work with people you love to spend time with since working on a show involves spending A LOT of time together. It's also been very special for me because I have been able to support a friend in achieving a goal and in the process look at theatre from the point of view of someone who has NEVER done this before and you forget about the little things - things we take for granted. It is a good lesson to be reminded of the process and how one approaches a play, a character, a rehearsal, etc. It is such a great opportunity to go back and think and explain process and terminology, etc. It gives another appreciation and understanding of theatre and, at times, it is very difficult to articulate what you do and why. It's been good to bring that to the surface.

How did you get started in theatre?

MOLLY: Doing some community theatre was actually on my "bucket list" and a big reason that I moved to Annapolis, MD in 2009. I knew the community theatre world was strong here. I also have meet a good number of people in this theatre community over the years of visiting this area.

ALICIA: My whole life I have felt the desire to perform, from singing in my church choir to school productions to majoring in Performing Arts at Emerson College to being here now. So, I can't exactly say how I got started - I just know I've always been doing something involving the arts, music, and dance.

What's been your favorite/funniest stage moment?

MOLLY: TBD (but I hope not too eventful or exciting for my first time out!)

ALICIA: I wouldn't know where to start. Maybe that is a question for Ron Giddings (Artistic Director). We have certainly had some funny moments.

Molly, this is your first show with Standing O, describe how your experiences have been so far?

MOLLY: Eye opening to say the very least! I have 15 lines in this play and I thought that that was a small enough role that it would be "easy." I have found that in order to not only memorize your lines, but act, be somewhat loose and/or humorous is not as easy as one may think! I have also learned that you must know your lines well enough to deal with possible distractions and that is quite a task! Short of having my boyfriend throw things at me while practicing lines, I have tried to prepare for all the "oops" that may occur. I have a new respect for even the smallest of roles in a play!

Alicia, you've been an integral part of Standing O's productions over the past few years. Can you speak to your experiences working with Standing O?

ALICIA: Well, I have done more shows with Ron than any other person he has worked with in his extensive career. And I am very proud of that fact. I really respect the vision and mission of Standing O and have had opportunities to perform roles and/or songs that I never would have known I could do. I am constantly challenged and educated by the material this company chooses to do as well as the people that come on board to be a part of it. I have gained so much from fellow cast mates and collaborators, such as David Thompson, Kevin Wallace, Zarah Rautell, Ernest Liotti and so many others!

With this being the U.S. Premiere of After the Dance, what were your first reactions to the play?

MOLLY: I really love the play. I think that it is actually a reflection of what we are going through as a society right now. As we have gone through rehearsals, it has been interesting to learn more and more detail on the plot in general as well as the intricacies of each character.

ALICIA: I honestly can't remember - it was so long ago... when Ron first read the play he called me immediately and was like, "you have to read this right now!!!" I read it, and we talked about it and knew that it was a perfect piece for Standing O. We discussed the where, when, and how it was it going to come to fruition....that seems like three years ago now. He had been waiting for the right time and the right people to bring this together, and here we are!

How do you think it translates to an American audience?

MOLLY: *I am hoping that the audience will enjoy this play as much as I am!*

ALICIA: That is a very difficult question - because this play has so many layers, politically, emotionally, socially etc.

So, it could be easy to only look at the superficial aspects and miss how much this play applies to our current economic/social climate today. It will be interesting to see what the audience takes away from it.

How have rehearsals been going?

MOLLY: Rehearsals have been going very well. Again, being that this is my first play ever, I have really enjoyed watching a play go from paper to (almost) finished. This whole process is wonderful to not only watch, but be a part of as well!

ALICIA: Rehearsals are always a lot harder than you think they are going to be. However, with a cast like this, it is so rewarding and such a great opportunity to learn by watching and listening to the director guide the other actors and see the play and characters take shape and see how you fit in to all that... Carol, Zarah, Kevin ... are all amazing people to listen to, watch, and learn from.

Can you talk about the rehearsal process for AtD?

MOLLY: At this point I must say it seems like organized chaos! While the voices and characteristics are coming together for each character, the play is less than two weeks away! But, this being my first, I am sure that they all have this craziness toward the end. I am just silently sitting back and taking it all in and trusting that it will be marvelous in the end! I suppose you could say a play is like Thanksgiving dinner-no matter how much you plan, there is always that last minute frenzy!

ALICIA: That sounds about right. And, as many shows as I have done at this point in my life, it is always that way. I think just last rehearsal we looked at each other and said, "Whose idea was this? ... Why did we think this was going to be fun?" I think I even apologized to Molly for getting her into this mess... but it will all come together - fear is a great motivator.

Do you currently or have you worked with other theatre companies around the area? Any other upcoming productions?

MOLLY: Not at this time, but I am looking!

ALICIA: I have worked with Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre, Colonial Players, Annapolis Chorale, Young Victorian Theatre Company, Dignity Players as well as helped with school productions at Chesapeake Academy. I will be auditioning for a few things in the next month or two - I will keep you posted!



STAND UP FOR STANDING O

We deeply appreciate your commitment to supporting the arts and showing your appreciation for Standing O Productions. We welcome all gifts and donations. However, if you cannot donate but can support us by coming to our many exciting events and productions, please consider becoming a subscriber for the 2011 Season.

*Please make checks payable to:
"Standing O Productions"*

*Checks can be mailed to:
P.O. Box 579*

Severna Park, MD 21146

When money's tight, consider supporting your favorite theatre company in another way...

VOLUNTEER!

Standing O is always looking for volunteers to serve in many ways, including: performance ushers and bartenders, technical design and construction, marketing efforts, etc.

Please contact our Volunteer Coordinator
Debbie Barber-Eaton at

standingoproductions@gmail.com

As we begin a new year with Standing O, I hope you'll stay connected and join us for upcoming shows. Happy 2011!

Cheers,

Christina Enoch Kemmerer

Standing O's Board of Directors

Ron Giddings (Artistic Director)

Christina Enoch Kemmerer (Marketing Director)

Constance Giddings (Managing Director)

Debbie Barber-Eaton (Volunteer Coordinator)

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