

# In the Wings

We're Live

The Newsletter of the Chattanooga Theatre Centre ★ April 2011 ★ Issue 2

## It's Time to Raise The Roof at the Theatre Centre

A million dollars in two years: that's the goal the Board of Directors has set to raise for important, much-needed capital improvements. At the top of the list to be fixed is our leaky roof, followed by the heating and air conditioning system. We even have ambitions for solar power. The complete wish list of improvements is on page 5. If you'd like to help, please contact us at P.O. Box 4023, Chattanooga, TN 37405 or call 423-267-8534.

## Inside

Blues For Mister Charlie..2
House at Pooh Corner.. 3
Summer Academies ..... 3
Auditions.....4
The Women ..... 4
TNL ..... 6

## MAIN STAGE

### Experience Tennessee Williams' Definitive *Cat*

Experience *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* the way Tennessee Williams meant it to be with this stellar production at the Chattanooga Theatre Centre on the MainStage April 1 through 17.

Williams, as he so often did with his plays, rewrote *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* for many years. Williams prepared this version for the American Shakespeare Festival production in 1974, with all the changes that satisfied the playwright's desire for a definitive text.

The sensuality and excitement of *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* first heated up Broadway in 1955 with its gothic American story of two brothers (and their wives) vying for the inheritance of their dying father, Big Daddy, amid a whirlwind of sexuality untethered (in the person of Maggie the Cat), and the burden of love repressed (in the person of her husband, Brick Pollitt).

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the Drama Critics Award for Best Play, this *Cat* is packed with award-winning, seasoned CTC veterans that are proven favorites of Theatre Centre audiences.

**Kim Jackson** (*Miss Firecracker*, Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*, Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*) is Maggie the Cat.

**Jonathan Harris** (*Ring Round the Moon*, *Pig Farm*), in town from New York City for this play, is Maggie's husband, Brick.

**John Hammons** (*The Best Man*, *The Primitive Streak*) is Big Daddy.

**Coylee Bryan** (*Enchanted April*, *Steel*



*Magnolias*) is Big Momma.

**Lizzie Chazen** (*The Producers*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*) is Mae.

**Clay Johnson** (CTC newcomer who has appeared in productions at Chatt State and Lee College) is Gooper.

**Lamar Bankston** (*The Crucible*, *The Best Man*) is Doctor Baugh.

**Steven Berryman** (*The Book of Liz*, *A Christmas Carol*) is Reverend Tooker.

The Pollitt children are played by **Emily Alcock**, **Joanna Brown** and **Jonah Davis**, all newcomers.

**Bob Willie** (*Doubt*, *Our Town*) is director.

**Kenndra Anthony** (*A Lesson Before Dying*, *Post Mortem*) is Stage Manager.

Continued on page 5

Co-Producer: Comcast dream big.

Media Sponsor: brewer media everywhere every day.

## Blues for Mister Charlie Examines the Wounds of Race

*Blues For Mister Charlie* by James Baldwin, a wrenching drama loosely based on the Emmett Till murder, will be presented on the CircleStage April 15 through 30. The play is a joint production of the Chattanooga Theatre Centre and Destiny Theatre Company.

Noted by *The New York Times* as, “A play with fires of fury in its belly, tears of anguish in its eyes, a roar of protest in its throat,” James Baldwin’s drama takes us into a small Southern town where a white man murders a black man, then throws his body in the weeds.

“Mister Charlie” is slang for the white race, and the title intimates the racial struggle that weighs upon the white as well as the black communities.

**Hope Alexander** directs the play. The story of her deeply personal experience with the play, in her own words, follows this article. The cast includes **Andy Burns** as Negro minister Reverend Meridian Henry; **Mario DeAndre Brooks**, **Myletta Lacey**,

## CIRCLE SERIES

**Garrell Woods**, **Ashley McKoy**, **Shellyta Chatman**, **Anthony Brown**, and **Jeffrey Pinkerton** as Negro students; **Alease Davis** as Mother Henry, Rev. Henry’s mother; **Devante Williams** plays Richard, Rev. Williams’ son. **Shelia Wofford** is Mama D., owner of the juke joint.

**LeBron Benton** is cast as the editor of the local newspaper; **Tim Shields**, the accused murderer; **Joanna Key**, his wife. **Bonnie Stoloff**, **Jennifer Bryant**, **Ryne Williams**, **Daniel Pound** are white townspeople.

For the trial, **John Echols** is Counsel for the State; **Ward Fleissner** is the Judge; **Nancy Berg** is Counsel for the Bereaved. **Audrey Harris** is Stage Manager for this production; **Jan Bramlett** and **Hannah Powell** are Assistant Stage Managers.

*Blues For Mister Charlie* will be presented Friday and Saturday night at 8:00p.m. April 15 and 16; April 22 and 23; and April 29 and 30. Tickets are \$18 and are available online at [www.TheatreCentre.com](http://www.TheatreCentre.com) or by calling the CTC box office at 267-8534.



*I was 16 years old in 1964 when James Baldwin's masterpiece, Blues For Mister Charlie had it's first performance. In that same year I became a part of the civil rights protests and picket lines in San Francisco, California. We were all schooled in the non-violent protocols that were laid forth by Dr. King and we thought we were ready for anything. "This little light of mine...I'm gonna let it shine...". The South was a scary place to me then. A place where the KKK was condoned, where children were murdered in their churches, a place where one of my own best friends who'd had the courage to be on one of the Freedom Bus rides died in a jail cell in Mississippi when she had an epileptic seizure and no one came to her aide. Little did I think that 47 years later I would be living and creating here! I am THRILLED to be a part of Destiny Theatre Company and The Chattanooga Theatre Centre's first official collaboration. I have wanted to direct Blues for as long back as I can remember. It is a play that is filled with rage and hope, pain and passion and above all, truth and love. It is love, finally, that will set us free from our shame filled past — truth that will educate our young so that this kind of barbarism won't happen again. It is an honor to be working on this play with two of Chattanooga's most accomplished theatre companies. As we sang in the old days, "black and white together, we shall not be moved..."! It is my hope everyone will come and see it and become a part of the dialog of change.*

— Hope Alexander, Director



James Baldwin’s drama takes us into a small Southern town where a white man murders a black man, then throws his body in the weeds. *Blues For Mister Charlie* is an unsparing and at times agonizing probe of the wounds of race. Baldwin turns a murder and its aftermath into an inquest in which even the most well-intentioned whites are implicated—and in which even a killer receives his share of compassion. From left: Tim Shields, LeBron Benton, and Garrell Woods. (Photo by Alex McMahan)

## Two Poohs? Who Knew? Youth Theatre Develops Two Casts to Present a Great Show for Kids

Everyone's favorite honey-loving bear, Winnie the Pooh, returns to the Mildred M. Montague Stage at the CTC May 6 in *The House at Pooh Corner*.

The play by Bettye Knapp, based on the book by A. A. Milne, is presented for young

audiences by young actors of the James K. Steakley / Meyer Winer Youth Theatre of the CTC.

In *The House at Pooh Corner*, Christopher Robin decides to run away with his friends from the Hundred Acre Wood when he learns he is to be sent away to the dark and mysterious "Education." Nobody knows exactly where that is, but if he's sent to such a distance place, what will his friends possibly do without him?

Two completely different and separately rehearsed casts present this charming tale, each cast presenting eight performances. The Honey Cast is directed by Lizzie Chazen; The Haycorn Cast is directed by Maria Chattin-Carter. Stage managers are Matthew Howard and Laura Maynard. Assistant Director is Caroline Anderle Co-producers for this production are Clif and Ruzha Cleaveland, Steve and Amy Meller, and John Maynard and Rhea Thurman. Chattanooga Parent is Media Sponsor. Underwriter for the Youth Theatre season is GPS.

This is the final production of the 2010-2011 Youth Theatre Season.



**Maggie Carlton and her friends are enrolled in the *Acting Plays* class taught by Lizzie Chazen at the Theatre Centre. There's a summer of fun and learning for pre-K through 12th grades at the CTC Summer Academies. Enroll now!**

### *Looking for a Creative Outlet for Your Youngster This Summer? Consider the CTC Summer Academies*

The Chattanooga Theatre Centre Summer Academies offer young people of all ages the opportunity to learn and work in an actual theatre environment. Trained and experienced leaders offer instruction in acting for the stage, dance, creative play, comedy, and more for beginners and accomplished artists.

An intensive, three-week Performance Training Academy gives young actors a "summer stock" experience. And many classes mount productions at the end of the sessions for friends and family to enjoy.

For beginning and intermediate students of dance, Lindsay Fussell offer Dance Intensives.

Summer Academies begin June 6 and continue through August 5. Classes are available for Pre-K through high school in full- and half-day sessions of one, two, and three weeks

Some after-care is available. Enrollment is open now. Check the complete schedule online or call the box office for details.

#### The Role

Christopher Robin  
Winnie the Pooh  
Piglet  
Owl  
Eeyore  
Tigger  
Kanga  
Roo  
Rabbit  
Early  
Late

#### The Honey Cast

Jed Cole  
Willie Derrick  
Faith Howard  
Blake Hornsby  
Jordan Alexander  
Kelseigh Garrett  
Sierra Lane-Singleton  
Sophie Lyle  
Sydney Rymer  
Taryn Bracher  
Augusta Westoff

#### The Haycorn Cast

Matthew Wesolowski  
Tim Howard  
Macey Henry  
Isabella King  
Seth Patton  
Bobby Burkich  
Maggie Lucas  
Aubrey Floyd  
Sophie Shelton  
Abby Askew  
Ross Binder

The performance schedule for school shows is as follows:

Honey Cast: May 12 and 18 Haycorn Cast May 13 and 19. Shows at 9:30; 11:00; and 12:30. Homeschoolers are welcome to participate at the special rate for these performances with advance reservations.

The public performance schedule is as follows:

Haycorn Cast: May 6 at 7:30; 8 at 2:30; 14 at 2:30; 20 at 7:30; 21 at 2:30

Honey Cast: May 7 at 2:30; 13 at 7:30; 15 at 2:30; 21 at 7:30; 22 at 2:30

Tickets to public performances are available online at [www.TheatreCentre.com](http://www.TheatreCentre.com) or by calling 423-267-8534. Tickets for school shows may be reserved only by phone.



*The Women*, the brilliant Broadway comedy that has become a modern classic, comes to the MainStage May 13 through 29 - jungle red nails and all!

The play is a caustic commentary on the pampered lives and power struggles of wealthy Manhattan gold-diggers, schemers, gossips, and social climbers and the gossip that propels and damages their relationships. The image of womanhood depicted by playwright Clare Boothe Luce is somewhat unflattering, but beneath the surface, Luce reveals a human understanding for, and sympathy with, some of its outstanding figures.

*The Women* features 44 characters played by 19 actors, all of them female. While men frequently are the subject of their lively discussions and play an important role in the action on-stage, they are never seen.

*The Women* is directed by **Bro. Ron Fender**, a 12-year, 10-play veteran of the Chattanooga Theatre Centre. He predicts audiences will like *The Women* because it's "an old-fashioned play with style."

"It's attractive comedy with great slapstick humor. Even the villains are very endearing. If you like old movies and comedies, you'll love *The Women*."

*The Women* features **Judy LaMance** as the oft-divorced yet hopelessly romantic Countess De Lave. **Anne Swedberg** is Mary Haines, the demure housewife who surprises everyone by initiating a divorce. **Nancy Hammons** is Mary's mother, Mrs. Morehead, strict and traditional. **Brenda Hodges Binder** is the gossipy and selfish Sylvia. **Stefanie Oppenheimer** plays Edith, a woman who dislikes children but has four.

The talented cast also includes **Emma Veys, Amanda Medlin, Rhea Thurman, Heather Thompson, Elaine Bradway, Sophie Veys, Eve Hildebrant, Whitney Standifer, Rebecca Collins, Erin McKown, Wanda Lee, May Wood, Karen Faye, and Ashlei R. Dempsey.** Stacy Helton is stage managing the show. The script for *The Women*, first produced

in 1936, was revised for a 1973 production, and this later version selected for this performance is set in 1964.

"This is fitting because that was the beginning of women's liberation, when women had new options and choices," said producing director **George Quick**. "It was another pivotal time in the evolution of women and their roles in society."

"It's about women, yes," says Bro. Ron. "But it's also about the mores, hypocrisies, and betrayals we all experience in modern life."

"*The Women* is great fun," he adds. "I love it."

## COMING AUDITIONS

### *Rent*

by Jonathan Larson

A CircleStage Musical Production

Auditions: April 10 & 11 at 7:30 p.m.

Production Dates: June 17 - July 16, 2011

Directed by Scott Dunlap

Musical Director Jason Whitehead

### *Hairspray*

Book by Thomas Meehan and Mark O'Donnell

Music and Lyrics by Marc Shaiman

Lyrics by Scott Wittman

A MainStage Musical Production

Auditions: April 17 & 18 at 7:30 p.m.

Production Dates: July 1 - 24, 2011

Directed by George Quick

Musical Director Mike Lees

Choreographer Lindsay Fussell

Info at [www.TheatreCentre.com/](http://www.TheatreCentre.com/)

volunteers

# CALENDAR

## April

1. *Cat* 8pm/Gala 7pm
2. *Cat* 8pm
7. *Cat* 7pm
8. *Cat* 8pm
9. *Cat* 8pm
10. *Cat* 2:30pm  
*Rent* Auditions 7:30pm
11. *Rent* Auditions 7:30pm
14. *Cat* 7pm/Real-time captioning
15. *Cat* 8pm/Brewer Night 7pm  
*Blues* 8pm/Opening Night Party/7pm
16. *Cat* 8pm  
*Blues* 8pm
17. *Cat* 2:30pm  
*Hairspray* Auditions 7:30pm
18. *Hairspray* Auditions 7:30pm
22. *Blues* 8pm
23. *Blues* 8pm
25. Dance Pre-Summer Session Begins
26. Salsa Class Begins
29. *Blues* 8pm
30. *Blues* 8pm

## May

6. *Pooh* 7:30pm
7. *Pooh* 2:30pm
8. *Pooh* 2:30pm
13. *Pooh* 7:30pm  
*The Women* 8pm/Gala 7pm
14. *Pooh* 2:30pm  
*The Women* 8pm
15. *Pooh* 2:30pm
17. *Tuesday Night Live* 5:30
19. *The Women* 7pm/Real-time Captioning
20. *Pooh* 7:30pm  
*The Women* 8pm
21. *Pooh* 2:30pm & 7:30pm  
*The Women* 8pm
22. *Pooh* 2:30pm  
*The Women* 2:30pm
26. *The Women* 7pm
27. *The Women* 8pm
28. *The Women* 8pm
29. *The Women* 2:30pm

## Cat On A Hot Tin Roof

Continued from page 1

Producing director George Quick says: “To see this play in the South, played by Southern actors gives it richer meaning and depth - makes it vibrant and visceral. It is exciting to witness our volunteer actors rise to the challenges presented by a master playwright like Tennessee Williams in what I think is his masterwork. Once again our volunteer actors transcend what many folks think of as ‘community theatre’ and bring us Theatre for the community to be proud of.”

Special events during this production:

Opening Night, April 1(Friday): At 7:00 p.m. before the 8:00 p.m. curtain, celebrate Big Daddy’s Birthday Party. Special Southern-flavored hors d’oeuvres by Events with Taste, and the Planters Punch is complimentary.

April 14 (Thursday): Real Time Captioning for deaf and hard-of-hearing patrons sponsored by Barnett & Company and the Hearing Loss Association of America, Chattanooga Chapter. Note that for this show, real time captioning is taking place on the second Thursday of the run.

April 15 (Friday): Girls’ Night Out sponsored by Brewer Media. More complimentary Planters’ Punch and snacks pre-show.

Tickets for this production are \$10 to \$30 and are available online at [www.TheatreCentre.com](http://www.TheatreCentre.com) or 423-267-8534.

## “Raise the Roof” Campaign Seeks to Raise \$1,000,000

At the kick-off to the Chattanooga Theatre Centre’s Capital Campaign to raise \$1,000,000 over the next two years to repair and upgrade our facilities for the enjoyment and safety of our patrons and volunteers, plans announced include replacing our HVAC system; adding solar panels to the roof; installing a section of live roof (a green roof system); and fixing the roof (our top priority). By stopping leaks and replacing ceiling tiles, our beautiful lobbies will be more attractive for rentals — corporate events, parties, receptions and weddings.

### When Do We Begin?

We’re already on our way! We began raising the needed funds while we’re getting estimates and working with contractors so that we can begin to repair our facility as soon as the money starts coming in. In fact, we’ve already used some of the money raised to replace the compressor on our air conditioner, step one in replacing the entire HVAC system.

### What about that \$500,000?

The recent anonymous gift of \$500,000 made it possible to pay down our debt and begin some of the necessary improvements to our facility including installing new lobby floors and walls in both the Circle and Main Lobbies, replacing computer equipment in our offices and technical booths, and upgrading the MainStage light control board and dimmer rack.

### Show Me the Money!

Here’s a breakdown of where the money will be spent (based on estimates gathered in 2010):

Roof Repair and Replacement	\$ 200,000
Live Roof Section	\$ 24,000
HVAC Replacement	\$ 250,000
Solar Awning Main Lobby Terrace	\$ 80,000
Roof Top Solar Array	\$ 220,000
Ceiling Replacement	\$ 5,000
Upgrade Stage Lighting	\$ 62,950
Upgrade Sound Equipment	\$ 21,050
Refinish Dance Floor	\$ 5,000
Replace worn seating in Circle Theatre	\$ 20,000
Repair Main Auditorium Seating	\$ 2,000
Upgrades to Public Restrooms	\$ 5,000
Repair Main Lobby Window Blinds	\$ 2,000
Purchase Additional Lobby Chairs	\$ 3,000
Contingency	\$ 100,000

Total Capital Expenditures \$1,000,000

*For updates, to share your comments or questions, or to make donations, please contact us at 267-8534 or email [george@theatrecentre.com](mailto:george@theatrecentre.com)*

## Dinner And A Show Offers Two Choice Restaurants

The Chattanooga Theatre Centre joins with Foodworks and Terra Nostra to offer you a full evening of entertainment for just \$35 per person.

Start with dinner at Foodworks at 205 Manufactures Road or Terra Nostra at 105 Frazier Avenue. Then hop just a short distance to the Theatre Centre to enjoy any of the productions in our fantastic lineup. Just make sure it’s a 6:15 p.m. dinner reservation for an 8:00 curtain and a 5:15 p.m. dinner reservation for a 7:00 curtain.

Both restaurants, located on the NorthShore, offer special menus with appealing choices for you to enjoy.

Just call the CTC box office to make one reservation for both events: dinner and a show. What a great way to entertain guests — no more arguing over the check! It’s non-stop entertainment and an outstanding value. For reservations, call the box office: 267-8534.



**Kim Jackson is Maggie and Cat, and Jonathan Harris plays her husband, Brick, in the CTC MainStage production of the Tennessee Williams classic, *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*. (Photo by Alex McMahan)**

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## Tuesday Night Live Rolls Back to the Theatre Centre May 17

LIVE! From the Chattanooga Theatre Centre...It's **TUESDAY NIGHT!**

Chattanooga's liveliest "ungala" — rolling into the Chattanooga Theatre Centre on May 17 — is a fundraising event like no other in the city. The entertainment is brash, biting, and laugh-out-loud funny with nothing and no one in Chattanooga off limits to the slings and arrows of outrageous humor.

The food is scrumptious and plentiful. The wine flows freely, and the atmosphere is laid back and casual. It's an unstuffy gathering where you can arrive directly from work, have a great time, and still get home at a reasonable hour. *Tuesday Night Live!* takes place from 5:30 - 7:30 in the CTC lobby and MainStage areas. Linda Harwell is chair of this hit, fundraising event.

The extensive pre-show auction is again in the capable hands of volunteer Judy LaMance. Items will be, for the first time, offered for bid at the event as well as online (some of them exclusively online) May 1 through May 15. Items include (but certainly are not limited to):

**Orlando/Disney Package:** A four-night stay at a five-bedroom house in Windsor

Hills in Orlando. Plus four one-day park hopper passes to Disney World.

**Smokies/Dollywood Package:** A two-night stay at Music Road Inn in Pigeon Forge plus two one-day tickets to Dollywood.

**Financial Planning:** An Ameriprise

Financial Planning Relationship with Bryan Kelly, a \$2000 value

**Broadway Memorabilia** from Dreamgirls, Hairspray and Spiderman.

For more information about the auction and tickets for the event, visit us online.



**FINALE** from the 2010 *Tuesday Night Live!* event at the CTC. TNL 2011 is May 17.