

EVERGREEN players

Autumn 2003

Players Ready for the Challenge of Staging Classic Courtroom Drama

There's nothing small about a play like *Inherit the Wind*. It calls for a cast that Gene Kato, director, describes simply as "huge." It deals with big themes – Evolution vs. Creationism, Freedom of Thought, Freedom of Religion, Justice, Education, Democracy.

"Since *Inherit the Wind* first graced the Broadway stage, the play has been performed almost every night somewhere in the world," writes Lyndsey McCabe from the American Studies Program at the University of Virginia. She dedicated an entire website to the play. "The immense popularity of the play – bordering on obsession – suggests that the issues (Jerome) Lawrence and (Robert E.) Lee dramatized hit a nerve across social, regional and religious lines."

Inherit the Wind has a long, distinguished history in performance. Since the play opened in 1955 on Broadway, actors the likes of Ed Begley Sr. and Melvin Douglas, Spencer Tracy and Fredric March, Jason Robards and Kirk Douglas, George C. Scott and Jack Lemmon have played the leads.

A person might be tempted to ask director Kato and the Evergreen Players, "What, are you nuts?"

But it's the challenge of mounting a production of one of the classics that makes it so much fun. Besides, for all its bigness it's a remarkably accessible play. In other words, it's a really great story.

The story centers on the trial of Bertram Cates, a young teacher jailed for reading a passage from Dar-

win's *Origin of Species* to his high school science class. The outside world descends on Cates' home town, Hillsboro, a sleepy village somewhere in rural America, sweltering in the July heat. Prosecution and defense

have rolled out the big guns: Matthew Harrison Brady, the famous orator and three-time candidate for president arrives with great fanfare on the side of the law; Henry Drummond, reviled by Hillsboro's Rev. Brown as "a vicious, godless man," comes to argue the case for the defense.

"We are very careful to attempt to stay neutral and not tip our hand toward Creationism or Evolution," Kato says. "It would be very easy to slant the production. The play raises essential questions on free thought. It's an issue that we still are grappling with on a daily basis. I won't say which camp I fall into with respect to the surface debate, but I admire both Brady and

Drummond for their passion and their sense of what they feel is right."

The playwrights don't treat the characters as mouthpieces for a particular cause. Larger than life though they are, Brady and Drummond are all too human, as are the people of Hillsboro.

The Evergreen Players' production of *Inherit the Wind* tells their story weekends, Oct. 24-Nov. 9, 2003, at Center/Stage.



Poster design and artwork by Richard Orf.

Bountiful Trip to Littleton: Show Takes Top Honors at 15th Annual CCTC Festival



Photo by Rick Kuebler

Award winning cast and crew from left (back row): Peter Hughes, Ray Berry, Jane Stanfield, Din Manobla, Kerry Beebe, Dave Avery, Shane Delavan, Steve Moody; (front row): Molly

McNally praised the production as “very, very touching and very believable.” He gave high marks to Hughes as the director for smooth staging and attention to detail. He dubbed the production “a play as honest as the heat of summer and as touching as the sweet sunsets of Texas.”

Hilliker called it “a really nice production” with good ensemble support. She praised the use of the set – distinctive for its simple, box-like construction – and called it “a great idea.”

This year marked the first time Evergreen Players won the Best Director award and the first time Hughes, who’s been named to the All State Company several times, took the directing award.

We congratulate the entire cast and crew of T3B, as it fondly came to be known – those who began the journey in Evergreen in January, as well as those who carried on through to Littleton in June. Bravo and thanks!

Evergreen Players walked away the big winner at the 15th Annual Colorado Community Theatre Coalition Festival at Littleton High School this summer. Our production of “The Trip to Bountiful” won six of eight major awards.

The Players has made an excellent showing at CCTC over the years, but 2003 was a near sweep. Here’s a list of honors:

- **First Place Production** – Evergreen Players
- **Best Director** – Peter Hughes
- **Best Actress** – Lisa Kraai as Thelma
- **Best Costume Design** – Fran Gibson

- **Best Set Design** – Peter Hughes
- **Peoples’ Choice** – Evergreen Players

Not bad for a little 54-year-old theater group from the foothills, eh? Troupe members also were named to the All State Company: Peter Hughes, director and set designer; Fran Gibson, costume designer; and actors Lisa Kraai, Kerry Beebe and Shane Delavan. Din Manobla won the acting competition with her “Snow White” monologue.

Adjudicators for this year’s festival were Tom McNally, professor at University of Northern Colorado and artistic director for Little Theatre of the Rockies, and Dr. Rebecca Hilliker, who chairs the Department of Theatre and Dance at University of Wyoming.

AUDITION NOTICE

***Breaking Legs, Sat., Oct. 25,
2-4 p.m. at Center/Stage***

Four men, one woman. Prepare a short comic monolog and be ready to read from the script.

***Sylvia, Sat., Jan. 17, 1-4 p.m.
at Center/Stage***

Two men, two women. Cold readings from the script and improvisations.

**No appointments needed. Visit
www.evergreenplayers.org.**

Meet Peggy Morgan Stenmark, Our Artist in Residence for the 2003-2004 Season

When you come to a Players show this season, you'll likely see a new name on the roster and you may even detect a new artistic energy at work. New to us but not necessarily new to theater is watercolorist Peggy Morgan Stenmark. She will serve as artist in residence in the 2003-2004 season.

The search committee – Jan Hart, chair; Renye Ress and Din Manobla – looked at a host of qualified candidates, including directors, actors and artists, before choosing Stenmark. She is a full-time studio artist who lives in Evergreen.

“It was obvious that she was a professional, that she was extremely artistic and she was willing to pass that knowledge on to someone else. And I think that was probably as important as anything else,” Hart says. Stenmark’s duties with the Players not only will be to lend her artist’s eye to our productions but also to teach volunteers and Drama Camp kids.

Stenmark discovered a love for theater when she volunteered to help in the Littleton High School drama department when her daughter was a student there. Since 1997, she’s worked on shows as diverse as *Antigone*, *Prom Queens Unchained* and *Oklahoma*. She’s designed sets, painted backdrops, built props and costumes.

“Theater is kind of a culmination of a lot of things,” she says. She likes to sew and has done some fabric sculpture, created “odd stuffed creatures” and so on. Painting often is a cerebral activity for her and she likes to do something different at times.

“I used to think the coolest job in the world would be working for Jim Henson. You know, making those pup-



Artist Peggy Stenmark lives in Evergreen.

pets and figuring out how to make those weird creatures and all of that.” Theater seems to scratch that itch for her.

Also, theater offers her “lots of opportunities to try and do new things.” Things like building two 8-foot-tall

spider costumes and a full-body lobster suit for a student-written one-act play, for instance, or a triptych of saints and a large stained glass window for a production of *Pippin*.

As an artist, her specialty is watercolor and ink resist. *Watercolor* magazine featured her technique in its Winter 2003 issue. She shows at Foothills Art Center in Golden and has recently been accepted at West Southwest in Cherry Creek. One of her pieces recently was chosen for the 30th Rocky Mountain Watermedia Exhibition, also at Foothills through Oct. 26.

Her subjects vary – from graveyard statuary to Chinese pandas. “It’s kind of whatever I respond to in the environment,” she says.

We welcome her to the Evergreen Players’ family and look forward to working with and learning from her this season.

Hello to One, Good-bye to Two on Board

The Board of Directors said a fond farewell to two dedicated members recently. Din Manobla has been on the Board since 1999. When not appearing on stage in several award-winning productions, this AACT Regionals Best Actress never fails to pitch in. She’ll continue to help out with volunteers and will co-produce *Breaking Legs*.

Renye Ress has served on the Board since 2001 but she’s also done double

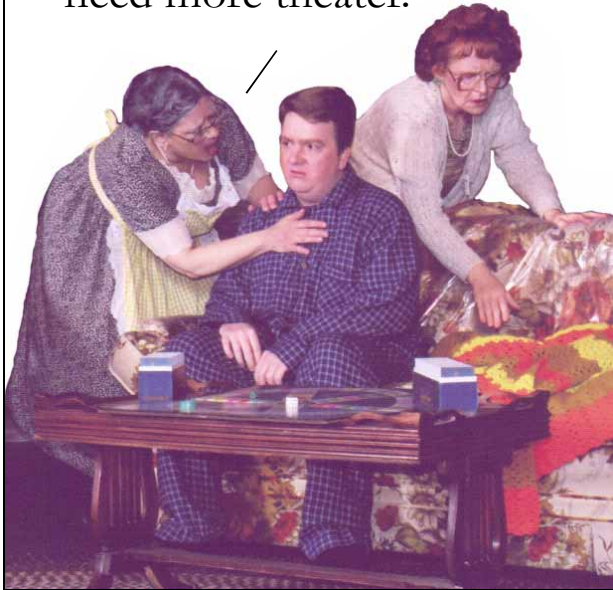
duty as Director of the Players’ very successful Drama Camp, a role she’ll continue in 2004. Oh, and she also designs great sets (*Over the River...*).

Thanks to you both! Don’t worry, we still have your phone numbers!

Becca Dellinger joined the Board in October. She was the Fairy Godmother in this past summer’s production of *Cinderella* and won rave reviews as Internship Program Coach.

Welcome, Becca!

Listen to your grandmother, Nick. You need more theater.



Cheer up. The Evergreen Players has all the theater you need in 2003-2004:

<i>Inherit the Wind</i>	Oct. 24-Nov. 9
<i>Breaking Legs</i>	Jan. 16-Feb. 1
<i>Sylvia</i>	Mar. 26-Apr. 18
<i>Hallelujah House</i>	Apr. 29-May 2
<i>The Secret Garden</i>	Jul. 9-Aug. 8

Save up to \$21 off the box office price when you purchase season tickets. Call 303.674.4934 or visit www.evergreenplayers.org.



The Evergreen Players
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