

The  
LITTLE  
THEATRE  
OF WALLA WALLA



# Informer

64th Season  
· Issue 3 ·  
November 2008

“A psychological twister full of suspicions and uncertainties” is how directors Rich Hinz and Douglas Carlsen describe their upcoming production of ANGEL STREET. The play is set in a gloomy, unfashionable old Victorian house in London during the 1880’s. Although the house has been recently purchased by Jack and Bella Manningham, played by Mark Raddatz and Summer Singer, no attempt to update it has been made. As a result, Bella finds it quite oppressive. Singer describes her character as insecure, and always concerned about what others will think. She feels she must be perfect and finds her husband intimidating. Also,

Add to this mix an impetuous young maid, Nancy, played by Eliza Van De Rostyne, who wishes to rise above her station, and who, Hinz adds, is “quite popular with the gentlemen of the town.” The stoic, solid, and very loyal housekeeper, Elizabeth, played by Terri Trick, is efficient and proper, but very protective of Bella. Enter charming, intelligent, happy, unpretentious Inspector Sergeant Rough, played by Brian Sheridan. Brian sees his character as relatively sure of himself.

The question though is “why is he here?” That, plus two policemen, played by Phillip Millett and Dana Crist, round out the cast.

Directors Hinz and Carlsen have also assembled a seasoned crew to help with the production:

Gloria Schille,  
Stage Manager;

Barb McKinney, Producer;

Connie McElrath, Props; Brian

Hatley, Light Designer; Dale Grogan, Light Board Operator; and Judy Tash, Costumer. Tash says her challenge has been finding the right kind of suits for the men. “The women are easy to sew for.”

Director Carlsen noted that ANGEL STREET was the basis for the movie GAS LIGHT starring Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergmann and Angela Lansbury, but said that was very different from the stage play. He promises that Little Theatre audiences will see a “classic British suspense thriller complete with fog.”

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December 5 and 6.

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## Angel Street

Performances: November 21, 22, 28, 29,  
December 5 and 6 at 8 pm  
and November 30 at 2 pm

Box Office Hours: November 18-December 6

(Tue-Thu) 3-6 pm (Fri-Sat) 3-8 pm  
and November 30 (Sun) 1-2 pm

Box Office Phone: (509) 529-3683

Reserve your tickets early!

Season Ticket Holders Phone Monday November 17

underneath all of this is her fear that like her mother, she may go insane. Mr. Manningham, in contrast, is a man of independent means, and very secure in his opinions and how he views himself and others around him.

Shakespeare salted his plays with insults so funny, irreverent and scurrilous they were separately collected into booklets.

## Words About the Words

The Puritans believed speaking words not your own even on stage was just a different way of telling lies. For decades “Banned in Boston” meant Beantown had shuttered a play for suggestive scenes or vulgar language.

Theater has always been controversial. And like theaters in every country at any point in history, Walla Walla’s Little Theatre has occasionally raised hackles. Local controversy mainly revolves around language, with some audience members objecting to suggestive, vulgar or irreverent words and phrases. No one connected with the Theatre wants to do or say something on stage that might offend against an audience member’s sense of propriety or his or her spiritual beliefs.

Both the Little Theatre’s Season Selection Committee and its Board of Directors read, discuss and choose the plays we put on. We consider seriously the sensibilities of our theater-goers. It is not the intent to offend audience members and in fact the committee goes to lengths to prevent that from happening.

The Selection Committee uses several criteria in choosing the four plays that make up our yearly offerings. These include how attractive certain plays will be to Walla Wallans. Also, because the Little Theatre is non-profit and all volunteer, will the show sell enough tickets to keep the doors open?

We also keep our talent pool in mind. Is there a qualified director who wants to and can do a particular play? How big a cast does a play need? A few years ago Little

Theatre put on a wonderful production of the musical *1776*, although it required 26 male actors and singers, but we can’t often muster such a big, specialized cast.

Sometimes an actor or audience member suggests a play we would love to do, but it has a set too complicated for our stage and equipment. *Noises Off* was another successful LT production but we could mount it only after some talented volunteers figured out how to build the technically complex set the play required.

While we need to keep in mind our audiences’ sensibilities, we also have to pay attention to our stage personnel. Putting on a play requires weeks of hard, sweaty, dedicated work. Community members sew costumes, design sound, build and light sets, act and direct—all for no pay except the satisfaction they can feel in how well they’ve done their job and how much they’ve learned in the process. Comedies have traditionally drawn our biggest audiences, but theater people need and want to stretch their wings. So we do an occasional classic, like *Tartuffe* or *Arms and the Man*, or mount a disturbing modern drama, like *View from a Bridge*. To satisfy all of our constituencies on and off stage, we must aim for a balanced season, with a comedy or two, a serious play that perhaps provokes discussion and thought long after the curtains close. To round out the season we usually do a musical or children’s play.

The Season Selection Committee reads, discusses and finally proposes a list of plays for the coming year. The Board of Directors reviews their proposals and then either approves the list or asks for changes and further suggestions. Choosing our annual offerings is a slow, considerate process involving 28 volunteers from different parts of the community with different backgrounds and experiences.

In 1949 in *Death of a Salesman* Arthur Miller set out to prove that one could write a tragedy not about kings or

*continued on page 3*



In addition to the regular season, the Little Theatre is proud to present a special fundraising event . . . the return of Gil Alden and Topher Murphy in *A Tuna Christmas*. This play is a sequel to “*Greater Tuna*” (2005-2006 season). Gil and Topher will reprise their roles as radio station OKKK news personalities and various other hilarious characters of Tuna, Texas.

## A Tuna Christmas

Performance dates are Thursday through Saturday, December 11, 12 and 13 at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, December 14, at 2:00 p.m. Ticket prices are \$10.00 each for festival seating and will be sold in the Box Office during the run of “*Angel Street*”. The Box Office will be open Thursday through Saturday, December 10, 11, 12 and 13 from 3:00-8:00 and from 1:00 to 2:00 on Sunday, December 14. The house will open one hour before curtain.

Words...continued from page 2

gods as the tradition had been, but about ordinary men and women and their everyday lives. Like Miller, for the past 60 years both novelists and playwrights felt their work must reflect American society at all levels and the language many people use.

Art reflects the world, and the world is rarely g-rated or even PG-13. It is difficult to find a play written after World War II that somewhere in it does not contain behavior or dialogue potentially offensive to some theatergoers. Adding another layer of difficulty to the Board's decision is that through copyright an author owns his or her play as thoroughly as an engineer with a patent owns his invention. Little Theatre risks a lawsuit if it changes a single word.

We hope Walla Wallans who now and then find something displeasing in a Little Theatre production do three things:

1. Realize that all our plays are chosen after a careful process; that Little Theatre must satisfy several constituencies, and tries hard to balance its obligations to all of them; that finding a balance is hedged by legal, financial and aesthetic considerations.
2. Think about how and why the offensive action or dialogue is in the play. Authors don't haphazardly use an oath or a vulgarity. The word or phrase has a purpose in forwarding the play. In Cemetery Club, Lucille uses stronger language than her women friends. Her language illustrates her more forceful personality. In Leading Ladies, a gentle man in love but thwarted at every turn finally explodes with the s-word, emphasizing his bewilderment and anxiety.
3. Of course tell us when you are displeased with a play. Better yet, write or call Little Theatre and suggest plays you would like to see performed. We will give your suggestions the same careful attention we always try to devote to the play selection process. The Little Theatre of Walla Walla's goal is "Good Plays, Done Well."

## Thank You!

The Little Theatre would like to express our gratitude for all those who participated in the raffle held during Broadway Bound and to our donors. A special thank-you to the Walla Walla Symphony for donating season tickets, to Baker Boyer Bank for the bottle of Cabernet Sauvignon from L'Ecole Cellars, and for gift certificates from Salumiere Cesario and Thundering Hooves. Congratulations to the winner, Bil Holway.

# Gallery Artist



*"CatTrack Studio, Friends and Associates"*

The owner of CatTrack Studio is pleased to present a collection of artists. Some are currently taking instruction from owner/art instructor Cass Spangrude. Some are continuing their education and exploring art with other instructors. Others participate in Art Lab nights practicing their already developed creative side.

Spangrude said "I always encourage my students to go on with their artistic endeavors by taking from other instructors and practicing their craft. Many have already taken from other instructors and want to see what I can add to their knowledge and skills.

"I have found teaching painting and drawing to be a delight and we often solve the world's problems in conversational discourse during the hours," she added.

"I typically offer beginning to intermediate watercolor instruction, pastel painting, and beginning drawing, to a variety of ages. Most instruction is private or semi-private with only 2-3 clients working on their own projects when possible. This gives them a lot of one-on-one attention.

"I have been painting and selling art since my teenage years in multiple mediums for over 35 years and I am constantly in awe of the range and creativity of my peers. I'm drawn to painting landscapes, florals, people, animals, especially horses, and anything that will stand still, or not, long enough!"

*Cass can be contacted through CatTrack Studio at 525-2004 or 529-1102.*

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## **Box Office hours for Angel Street**

begin Mon., Nov. 17, from 3:00 to 6:00 for phone orders from season ticket holders. Regular hours begin November 18, Tues-Thurs, from 3:00 to 6:00, Fri and Sat from 3:00 to 8:00, and 1:00 to 2:00 Sun for the matinee. Box Office hours continue until Dec. 6. The Box Office phone is 529-3683. Advance tickets are available for *A Tuna Christmas*.

The  
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# Angel Street

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November 21, 22, 28, 29, 30,  
December 5 and 6.

... COMING SOON ...

GALAS  
ARE  
BACK!

During the 2008-2009 season the Little Theatre will once again host opening night galas. Beginning at 7:00 light refreshments will be served and the preshow audience encouraged to view the gallery exhibit, meet the artists and socialize in anticipation of the opening night performance of Angel Street.



AUDITIONS

On Golden Pond auditions will be held December 2 and 3. The play will be directed by Cheryl Sutlick and Robert Randall. The love story of Ethel and Norman Thayer, who return to their

## On GOLDEN POND

summer home on Golden Pond for the forty-eighth year. He is a retired professor near eighty years old and Ethel is ten years younger. They are joined by their divorced, middle-aged daughter, her fiancé and his son. Go to [www.ltw.org](http://www.ltw.org) for a complete synopsis. Needed are three men, two women and the son, an adolescent in his early teens. Performance dates are February 13 through 28. For scripts or information call Jan Torland at 522-1485.

### The Little Theatre of Walla Walla Informer

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The Little Theatre of Walla Walla  
PO Box 39 - Walla Walla, WA 99362  
(509) 529-3683

<http://www.ltw.org>

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