

2011

Stage Center Theatre Newsletter- Apr. 2011

Kathleen Weiss

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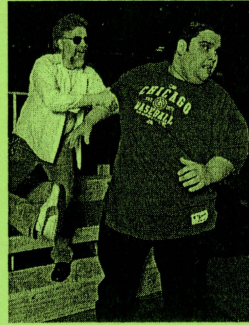
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Stage Center Theatre

Bleacher Bums

As most Chicagoans know, fans of the Cubs are devoted to their team. *Bleacher Bums*, a play conceived by Joe Mantegna and written by the Organic Theatre Company in 1977, explores how diehard Cubs fans never lose hope in a team that never fails to disappoint. The story follows a cheerleader, a blind man with a radio, and other eccentric fans at Wrigley Field as they make bets, drink, and watch the game. *Bleacher Bums* gives audiences a look at the unwavering optimism fans express at a good (or bad) game of baseball. This playful story will resonate with all audiences whether they love the game or love to laugh. Catch *Bleacher Bums* April 14-16, 21-23, and 28-30 at the Stage Center Theatre.



Cast:

Tiffany Blake: Melody
John Stiens: Greg
Tony Gasbarro: Zig
Jeff Wade: Decker
Dan Ochoa: Richie
Ryan Gilbert: Marvin
Michael Jando: Cheerleader
Kitty Mortland: Rose
Allen Shub:
Announcer/Guard

Organic Theatre Company

Established in 1970, the Organic Theatre Company has been contributing to Chicago Theatre for over 40 years. The company has recently re-emerged as a leader in Chicago, producing new adaptations of classic plays rarely seen in the Midwest. These plays are presented in a rotating repertory, allowing audience members to see the same actors cast in various roles over a short period of time. Over the past forty years the Organic Theatre Company has toured across the country and become a respected leader of drama in theatrical circles throughout the United States.

Joe Mantegna

Chicago native Joe Mantegna is a well-known actor, writer, and director. Mantegna got his start by acting in numerous Chicago productions, eventually making the move to Broadway. He pitched the idea for *Bleacher Bums* to members of the Organic Theatre Company and assisted in writing and performing in the first production.

Later Mantegna gravitated toward film and television. In 2004 he received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Los Angeles Italian Film Festival for his extensive work in film and television.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAIN STAGE 7:30PM

Reservations: (773) 442-4274

Bleacher Bums

April 14-16, 21-23, 28-30

As You Like It

June 9-11, 16-18, 23-25

You Can't Take it With You

July 21-23, 28-30, August 4-6

CHILDREN'S THEATRE 10:30AM

Reservations: (773) 442-5971

The Love for Three Oranges

Monday, Wednesday, Friday,
March-April

Stage Center Theatre

A great time for family and friends of all ages, Stage Center Theatre also offers a great value on entertainment. Admission to all productions is **free for students, faculty, and staff with a valid NEIU ID.**

Main Stage

General Admission.....\$10

Seniors/Alumni/Students.....\$8

Children 6-12.....\$6

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Where Theatre Happens: *Exploring Performance Spaces*

Theatre happens everywhere, all the time. Audiences witness performances on the streets, in ornate proscenium framed theatres, and in intimate black boxes. With so many choices it can be difficult to define what constitutes a performance space, but the common denominator appears to be that all require a venue that can be filled with various types of productions; from an intimate drama to a full musical coupled with a big band orchestra.

Proscenium Theatre

The proscenium theatre is the most traditional performance space seen in the Western world. This type of theatre creates a "box" that is literally "framed" by a proscenium arch. The visual created by this arch establishes the world of the play behind the frame while the audience sits in front of the frame. In this way the proscenium functions as a fourth wall that is impenetrable by the actors, but also enables the audience to accept that a world exists within the "frame." Additionally, the stage is based at a height level to the first row of seats. The proscenium stage usually has spaces on the left and right sides called "wings." These wings are out of the audience sightlines and can be used to store scenery or props. On either side of the wings there will often be a fly system. This system of ropes and pulleys works to shift scenery on or off stage by lifting scenery into the hidden space above the stage. This area is called the fly space. Scenery is stored in the air when not on stage.

Another feature found on some proscenium stages is the apron. This is usually a semicircle in front of the stage that works to facilitate a greater area for actors to perform in or can

be lowered to act as a pit. The "pit" houses the orchestra if live music will be used during a performance.

Local examples of proscenium theatres are the Cadillac Palace, the Oriental Theatre, and the Goodman Theatre. In fact, most of the theatres in the Chicago Loop fall into the traditional style of the proscenium theatre.

Thrust Theatre

The thrust acts as a variation of the proscenium theatre. There is still a small portion of the stage at the back that has a form of a proscenium arch, but most of the acting is done in front of the arch. In this way the fourth wall dissolves and three quarters of the world of the play exists in front of the proscenium. The stage is literally thrust into the audience so that three sides of the stage are surrounded by an audience, whereas in the traditional proscenium stage, only one side of the stage faces the audience. Thrust spaces often feel more intimate as the action of the play is closer to the audience. However, thrust spaces, just as proscenium spaces, often have areas behind their arch to store scenery and props. However, not all thrusts are in three-quarters. Variations exist throughout the thrust-style.

An example of this is the Stage Center Theatre at Northeastern. However, more abstract examples of this type of theatre can be found on a cat walk. Fashion models are surrounded on three sides by an audience, while almost all of the action occurs in front of the proscenium.

Thrust-style theatres may be found

in a variety of extremes. While a runway acts as an "extreme thrust," the Stage Centre Theatre exemplifies an average thrust.

Theatre in the Round

This type of performance space involves a circle-shaped stage that is completely surrounded by the audience. Audience members are placed all around the stage while actors play in every direction in order to reach their audience. Entrances and exits occur among the audience, and scenery sits stationary for the most part.

Black Box Theatre

This type of theatre is essentially a huge black cube. Black boxes act as empty canvases as the seating is convertible and can be set up to mimic any sort of performance space. Often these spaces are converted into various degrees of a thrust-style theatre. Some choose to build a false proscenium to give the appearance of a traditional space, or set chairs in a way that can have the audience view the production "in the round."

SUMMER THEATRE

Auditions will be held
Tuesday, April 26
and Wednesday, April 27
from 6-9 PM

For
As You Like It
And
You Can't Take It With You

For more information call
773.442.5975