Heart Strings raises $156K
by JEFF ELLIS
Editor

Almost $86,000 was raised by last week's Nashville performance of HEART STRINGS: The National Tour, according to steering committee member John Bridges. Along with the more than $70,000 raised by the Memphis performance three days earlier, AIDS-service organizations in the two cities will add 65% of the net profit to their coffers.

The Nashville performance, in the sold-out Polk Theatre of the Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC), was a tremendous success, judging not only from the gross ticket receipts, but from the reactions of the audience as well.

"Everyone was just amazed and thrilled by the whole evening," Bridges said. "When you do an event such as this, the moment you walk into the hall and see the room is crowded — and the parties before are well-attended — you know the evening's a smashing success."

Bridges said donations are continuing to come into the HEART STRINGS/Nashville office and that a "Trojan Horse Medley," one of the highlights of the musical revue's second act. The touring company raised a total of $156,000 during two Tennessee performances last week. — PHOTO BY TOMMY LAWSON

Bridges said donations are continuing to come into the HEART STRINGS/Nashville office and that a "Trojan Horse Medley," one of the highlights of the musical revue's second act. The touring company raised a total of $156,000 during two Tennessee performances last week. — PHOTO BY TOMMY LAWSON

Radecic: work on US, Tennessee legislators
NGLTF Legislative Director says future depends on organizing
by JEFF ELLIS
Editor

While lesbian and gay leaders throughout the country plot political strategies for a new decade, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) Capitol Hill lobbyist said Tennessee's future depends upon choices made today.

Peri Jude Radecic, NGLTF's legislative director and congressional lobbyist, said the future success of lesbian and gay-oriented legislation depends upon the electorate sending progressive representatives both to Washington and the statehouse.

Radecic was in Nashville earlier this week for an informal meeting with lesbian and gay leaders Sunday and a Monday night "Town Meeting" hosted by the Tennessee Gay and Lesbian Alliance (TGALA). During an interview with Dare, Radecic discussed legislative strategies and the future of lesbian/gay activism in the state.

"The future depends on the direction taken by organizations in the state," Radecic said. "There are a number of things an individual can do in the process of creating change. For example, it is important to target legislators who are swing votes on particular issues or who can be persuaded to vote with us on certain matters."

In addition to targeting specific lawmakers for lobbying efforts, Radecic recommended targeting others for defeat at the polls.

For those efforts to succeed, she said, it is imperative that leaders of lesbian and gay organizations have a better understanding of the legislative process on the local, state and national levels.

"All members of these organizations should become familiar with the legislative process. But it is vital the organization leaders understand it," she explained. — continued on page 5
**D A T E S**

**Chattanooga**

**Sundays**
Metropolitan Community Church
Worship service, Unitarian Church. 7:30pm.

**Mondays**
Chattanooga CARES Closed support group. 6:30pm. Info 615 297-2422.

**Thursdays**
Gay/Lesbian AA Open meeting, Unitarian Church. 6pm.

**Knoxville**

**Sundays**
Metropolitan Community Church
Worship service, 6pm. Corner Weiglar & Lomas. Info 615 521-6546.

**Mondays**
side Roxas Knoxville PWA Support Group. 7-8pm. Info 615 523-AIDS.
Gay Gratitude Group Open, non-smoking Alcoholic Anonymous. Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church, 3219 Kingston Pike. 7pm.

**Tuesdays**
side Roxas Knoxville Circle of Love family and friends support group, 6pm. Info 615 523-AIDS.
Gay and Lesbian Student Union/UTK Weekly meeting, 8pm. Info 615 926-8686.
Knoxville’s Teen Percent Monthly meeting, 2nd Tuesday only. 6pm. 1200 N. Central. Info 615 521-6546.

**Wednesdays**
side Roxas Knoxville HIV Support Group, 6:30pm. Info 615 523-AIDS.

**Fridays**
Gay Gratitude Group Alcohols Anonymous, MCC / Knoxville, 1200 North Central, Noon.

**Murfreesboro**

**Thursdays**
MTSU Lambda Support group for in-kidan and gay students, faculty, staff and alum of Middle Tennessee State University. 7:30pm. Info 615 352-7039.

**Nashville**

**Mondays**
Gay Alternative Hour Radio show, WEVL FM 90, 6-7pm.
Phoenix (Gay Alchohols Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 6pm. Info 615 272-9549.

**Tuesdays**
Phoenix (Gay Alcohols Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 6pm. Info 615 272-9549.

**Wednesdays**
Phoenix (Gay Alcohols Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 6pm. Info 901 272-9549.

**Thursdays**
P-FLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) Support group. St. John's Episcopal Church, 322 S. Greene. 1st Thursday only. Info 901 761-1444.
Phoenix (Gay Alcohols Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 6pm. Info 901 272-9549.
Into the Light (Women’s Alcohols Anonymous) Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 276-7379.

**Fridays**
Phoenix (Gay Alcohols Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 5:30 and 5pm. Info 901 272-9549.
Serious! Sober (Gay Alcohols Anonymous) Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9549.

**Saturdays**
Twisted Sisters (ACA) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. Noon. Info 901 276-7379.
Phoenix (Gay Alcohols Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9549.

**Sundays**
Holy Trinity Community Church Worship service, 11am. 1216 Forrest Ave. Info 615 276-2607.
Into the Light (Women’s Alcohols Anonymous) Meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. Noon. Info 901 276-7379.
Phoenix (Gay Alcohols Anonymous) Open meeting, Memphis Lambda Center. 8pm. Info 901 272-9549.

**Big events**

**Friday, October 6**
**Discussion** SURVIVING WELL WITH AIDS. Steve Pieters will speak about living with AIDS and about alternative treatments. Metropolitan Community Church, 131 15th Ave North, Nashville. Free. 7pm. Info 615 320-0288.

**Saturday, October 7**
**Discussion** SURVIVING WELL WITH AIDS. Steve Pieters will speak about living with AIDS and about alternative treatments. Sponsored by Metropolitan Community Church/Tri-Cities, at Holston Valley Unitarian Church, Johnson City. Free. Polex, 7:30pm. Info 615 926-4333.

**Sunday, October 8**
**Parnont Book Circle** Discussion of LOVING WELL, by Ann Allen Shockley. At Unitarian Universalist Church, 501 Woodmont Blvd, Nashville. Free. 5-7pm.

**Tuesday, October 10**
**Poetry Reading** Luiz Maria Umpierre will read from THE MARGUERITE PERRIN, at the Book Oasis, Nashville. Free. 7pm. Info 615 292-7100.

**Wednesday, October 11**
**NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY** Take your next step. Turn on your headlight.

**Friday, October 13**
**Gay Prom** Benefit for Metropolitan Community Church/Nashville and Nashville CARES. $10 per person, $15 per couple. At Warehouse 28, 2529 Franklin Rd, Nashville. 7pm. Info 615 297-4055.

**Saturday, October 14**
**Women’s Dance** Featuring DJ Dawn Barrett. At Laurel Theatre, 1538 Laurel Ave. Nashville. 7pm. Info 615 246-7466.

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HRCF addresses lesbian issues

WASHINGTON — Kathleen Stoll has been named to head the Human Rights Campaign fund's newly created Lesbian Issues and Outreach Project.

"It really is a dream come true to have this opportunity to work full time on lesbian issues," said Stoll. "Every person knows there is one issue that is uniquely special to them and that tugs the hardest on their heart. For me, it's the struggle for lesbian rights."

The project is intended to address the political and policy issues of the lesbian community. Stoll will develop policy positions and legislative proposals and integrate them into HRCF's political, lobbying, media and constituent mobilization operations.

"Kathleen's commitment, knowledge and skills are extremely impressive," said Tim McFeely, HRCF executive director. "We are delighted she has chosen to use those talents for the advancement of the lesbian community within the context of the Campaign Fund's Lesbian Issues and Outreach Program." •

NGRA pushes right to end life support

WASHINGTON — National Gay Rights Advocates, a gay civil rights law firm, has filed a brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Cruzan v. Cruzan. The Court will determine whether the family of Nancy Cruzan, a 31-year-old Missouri woman, can terminate her life support.

"The Supreme Court has already delivered a crushing blow to the sexual privacy rights of gay and lesbian Americans," said Benjamin Schatz, director of NGRA's AIDS Civil Rights Project. "We cannot allow the Court to further erode our privacy rights by taking away our right to medical privacy as well." •

NGLTF gets $360K

WASHINGTON — The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has received a $360,000 bequest, the largest in its 16-year history, from the late Harry R. Rowe, a psychiatrist from Long Beach, California.

"Dr. Rowe had many gay patients and friends, and recognized how terribly important it is for gay people to have greater protection under the law," said William McClure, executor of the Rowe estate. "He wanted to leave his assets to an organization that was committed to social change, one that has a proven record of accomplishment. It was on that basis that he chose NGLTF." •

Oregon ACT UP sues US Marshal

PORTLAND — The local chapter of AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) has filed a federal suit against Kernon Bagley, U.S. Marshal for the District of Oregon. The suit alleges that federal marshals in Portland illegally strip searched ten ACT UP demonstrators following their arrest at a protest against Food and Drug Administration AIDS policies.

The suit stems from a protest last February at which demonstrators blew whistles and chanted slogans outside FDA offices in a federal office building. Eleven demonstrators were arrested and charged with creating a disturbance in a federal office building. Before being released, they were stripped and arrested.

The demonstrators, all lesbians and gay men, call the search unjustified and in violation of their fourth amendment right against unreasonable searches. "The question the government will have to explain to a jury is 'why,'" said Tom Steenson, a Portland attorney representing the demonstrators.

According to ACT UP's Wayne Harris, "There was no reason to believe the arrestees would bring contraband or weapons into the holding area. This was nonviolent civil disobedience. The government knew that in advance from pre-demonstration discussions with ACT-UP representatives." •

Writers’ meet set

SAN FRANCISCO — "OutWrite '90", the first national conference for lesbian and gay writers, has been set for March 3-4, 1990.

"This is the first time ever that lesbian and gay writers are being brought together to meet, to share their talents and interests," said Jeffrey Escoffier, one of the event's organizers.

To find out more, call (415) 626-7929. •

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COMING SOON

JOURNEY

FOR THE FUN OF IT

SOMETHING NEW IN
NASHVILLE'S NITE LIFE
...Town Meeting
• continued from page 1

relationships. "Once they find out, it's over."

Several members of the audience indicated that they believed dislike of female impersonators was caused by internalized homophobia, especially among men who feel that cross-dressers present a false image of the gay community in heterosexual society.

Despite these difficulties, much of the overt discrimination in the community against female impersonators has ended, "I think Nashville is over all of that," Freedman said. "That's one plus for us." He remains concerned, though, that "some organizations don't want to encourage us to be members."

Freedman also talked about performers' concerns about how they were treated by the organizers of benefit shows. "We don't mind doing benefits," he said, but "There's not much follow-up" after performances are initially contacted about doing a show.

"As of times we don't have any idea about what it is they want" in regard to the length of the performance or the number of performers. Freedman also said performers would appreciate it if organizers would give them a better idea of how proceeds are used and thank them for their efforts after the show.

A woman who gave her full name, then asked that she be referred to only as "Ann," discussed the problems of recovering addicts in the community.

Phil Thomas, a black gay man, talked about the difficulties of being a "minority within a minority." He said blacks are especially unwilling to be openly gay. "Very few of us can say we are black and gay."

Thomas believes this is due to two sets of stereotypes. One is the belief among blacks that all gay men are "effeminate little white boys." The other is the prejudices of whites, including lesbian and gay whites, against blacks.

"All of those are myths," Thomas said, adding "Prejudice has no place in an already oppressed segment of society."

...work on legislators
• continued from page 1

Radecic said that national lobbying efforts (conducted primarily by NGLTF and Human Rights Campaign Fund [HRCF] in coalition with other groups) have "gotten better as the national gay and lesbian community has become more organized."

"The way we work is through coalitions. There are a number of issues that affect more groups than those in the gay community," she said. "We need to build and work in coalitions. It's not being done in an effective way. We need to build coalitions around issues."

But as political activism among lesbians and gay men has grown, so too have the voices of right-wing detractors.

"As we've become more active, we've opened ourselves up to attacks from right-wing politicians such as Senators Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and [U.S. Rep. William] Dannemeyer (R-Calif.). The community is experiencing more attacks from outside," Radecic said.

Whitcomb said that she had difficulties getting black lesbians to come to social events, and was therefore often unsure how to deal with them when they did come.

When asked how lesbian and gay groups might better reach out to blacks and other minority groups within the community, audience members suggested placing literature in places that were more accessible to those who do not frequent bars and other gay-oriented establishments.

"If you don't go to the bars, you never get any of the literature, and you don't know what's going on," complained one audience member.

Finally, Radecic spoke about the efforts of the NGLTF and how their experiences could serve as a guide for local groups.

NGLTF's work on anti-gay violence has served as a rallying point for the group's efforts, she said. The group gathered extensive data on the subject as a part of its lobbying effort for the Hate Crimes Statistics Act. "The data that we collected helped make a case," said Radecic.

As a part of its effort to get the bill passed, NGLTF also began working with other civil rights organizations, such as the NAACP and People for the American Way. The lobbying also got positive responses from many members of Congress and helped the group's fundraising efforts. "It's been a great vehicle," said Radecic.

She said similar anti-violence efforts at the local level might also prove effective, especially given that statistics show one out of 10 lesbians and one out of four gay men have been victims of anti-gay violence. "What we're doing at the national level is the same as what you're doing with here."

Radecic cited the success of organizational efforts in Iowa and Virginia as examples of how local groups can influence the political process. However, she cautioned against unwarranted optimism about how quickly changes could be achieved at the national level.

...
A starting report from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Task Force on Youth Suicide, issued in August, acknowledged that gay and lesbian youth are at an increased risk for suicide.

Evidence presented indicated that suicide is the leading cause of death among gay, lesbian and transsexual youth and that these youth may comprise close to 30% of the completed suicides annually.

Tennessean Kyle Newsom is not surprised by the report's findings. Although only 17, he's been through more in his life than most teenagers, and probably most adults, will ever experience.

Newsom says he's always known he was gay.

"I played with Barbie dolls as a kid and had tea-parties with my rag dolls. I loved watching my mother put on her make-up, and roll her hair. I love wigs," he said.

Newsom says that since kindergarten he was always teased by schoolmates.

"I was a fat child so they called me 'Fats' and I was always very sterilized. In junior high, they started calling me 'faggot.' I didn't even know what a faggot was. In high school, I wore fluorescent clothes and looked like a fat Boy George," he said.

"By this time I was so tired of being taunted and teased that I decided to change and tried to become very masculine. I even got myself a girlfriend. But it didn't work. After six weeks everyone found out and I just couldn't handle it, so I decided to quit school."

But Newsom never felt comfortable in a mainstream setting.

"I've always been a very flamboyant person, very loud and outgoing, and outspoken," he said. "In high school, I wore fluorescent clothes and looked like a fat Boy George with bleached blond hair and dark arched eyebrows. I was very open and very naive."

Then, when Newsom turned 16, he came out of the closet. On his birthday.

"That was when I finally accepted my homosexuality. That's when I decided not to try to change myself anymore. I wasn't going to try to have heterosexual relationships anymore because I realized I'd only be hurting myself and others if I did that," he concluded.

And his parent's reaction to his revelation?

"When I came out to my mother, she freaked out, she didn't accept it," he said. "She said that I couldn't be gay until I was 18, that I couldn't go to Metropolitan Community Church (MCC, a gay-affirmative denomination with congregations in Chattanooga, Knoxville, Nashville and the Tri-Cities as well as around the world) anymore and just had to keep my feelings to myself.

"This was very difficult for me because by this time I had made many older gay friends and I had to lie to my mother about where I was going and who I was hanging out with. But I had to because if I told her the truth, she wouldn't have been able to handle it.

"When I was growing up, my father was never there for me. He was there financially for me, but never as a father. My mother used to think that (my father's absence) and because I was around females basically all of my life was what contributed to my being gay. But that's stupid. I've just always been attracted to men."

THE PRESSURES brought on by the lack of understanding afforded gay and lesbian youths by classmates, friends and family are often believed to be the reasons so many attempt suicide. Newsom, like many other gay teenagers, attempted suicide three times.

"The first time I was 15," he remembered. "I felt very degraded. My pride had been taken away. I had used a razor blade and blood just went everywhere."

"The second time was because I just couldn't get anything through to anybody. Nobody wanted to accept me, no one wanted to talk to me. I couldn't talk about my feelings in my own home. I was always told to shut up and go to my room. But I just couldn't keep it to myself anymore, so that's when I cried out again."

"The third time was when I was 16, and I just plain wanted out. The peer pressure and the break up of a relationship [with another high school student] that I had been in was just too much. This one I did by taking a lot of barbiturates and drinking rubbing alcohol. The hospital had to pump my stomach. They sent me to [Nashville's] Patheron Pavilion where I stayed for a month. Then I was transferred to the Vanderbilt Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinic where I stayed for six months. That place was like an amusement park."
Newsom says that all of his gay teenaged friends have tried to commit suicide at least once.

"I think that's because they're just not happy with themselves. They haven't had the time yet to grow, to understand what it all means. And their home status has a lot to do with it, too," he said. "Most teenagers are still living with their parents and if the situation between them is bad, that contributes to their problem of coming out. The greatest obstacle for gay teenagers is coming out to their parents. They are so afraid of rejection that they turn to drugs and alcohol or thoughts of suicide. They need to escape to a different world in order to comfort themselves."

He attributes these feelings of low self-worth to a lack of role models. But he has still managed to find some.

"My role models, the people who I look up to, are [female impersonator and entertainer] Carmella Marcella Garcia and my Mom. I have a lot of respect for them," he said. "Also, Paul Tucker, the former pastor at MCC/Nashville, helped me out tremendously. I discovered MCC when I was 15 and it's helped me to feel better about myself and to show me that God loves me for who I am.

I'm lucky because my mom accepts me now, but others risk being thrown out of their homes, beat up, or placed in an institution where they don't want to be.

"My whole family now knows I'm gay. My parents are divorced. I have one younger brother who's 11 who knows but doesn't really understand. I'm very proud of my family for supporting me. We haven't been on an easy road together. This last year has been extremely difficult.

"I also have the support of a lot of straight friends, especially women. I find that straight women are the most open to me because they're not intimidated by gay males."

BUT NEWSOM said that a school specifically for homosexual adolescents—like New York's Harvey Milk School—would be a haven for some Tennessee students.

"It's a great idea," Newsom said. "I wish they had something like that here. I would be very helpful, because I think there are many teenagers out there who are gay and are afraid to admit it. Right now, there are no other outlets for gay teenagers in Nashville other than some bookstores and Centennial Park. They're too young to go to the bars.

"My high school, which was a mainstream public school, actually labeled me on my record as an emotionally unstable person, handicapped really, simply because I was gay. So it's very difficult for gay and lesbian teenagers in mainstream schools because to school officials, being homosexual is being disabled. In a school like the Harvey Milk School, they can be themselves. My Mom actually did check me into the Harvey Milk School for me, but I had to be a resident of the state."

THROUGH ALL of Newsom's school years, was he ever taught in his health classes that homosexuality is a viable, normal, healthy alternative lifestyle?

"No," he answered. "Homosexuality was never mentioned in school. The guys in my health class would laugh at me — I was the homosexuality class. It was never discussed. That's the whole problem, the lack of education about alternate lifestyles.

"Straight people must be made aware of us because we are everywhere. They have got to acknowledge us and afford us the dignity and decency that we deserve."

Besides a special school, what other ways could Tennessee serve its gay and lesbian youth?

"We certainly could use a gay learning center, a gay community center, or a gay oasis center. We need more gay youth counselors. I'd like to be a gay youth counselor someday because I understand the confusion that gay teenagers face."

Becoming a counselor may have to wait, however, because Newsom is full of plans for his future.

"First, I'd like to complete my education but I'm unsure if I should go back to school and try it again, or just go for my GED," he said. "I'd like to eventually go into cosmetology. I'd like to be a hairdresser. I'd like to become a professional drag queen and enter a lot of pageants. I've always been into drag. I'm very good at female impersonation."

For the community overall, Newsom hopes "to see all gay relationships become stronger, more bonded."

"The community needs to unite more than it does."
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reviewed by JEFF ELLIS
Editor

NASHVILLE PUBLIC THEATRE's production of the Molly Newman-Barbara Damashek musical QUILTERS is a moving, evocative piece of Americana presented by a superb ensemble. QUILTERS, in a series of musical and narrative vignettes, tells the universal story of the pioneer spirit of the American woman. Although set in earlier times, the story's timeless appeal is felt throughout the show in quietly dramatic — and sometimes boisterously comic — style. It is its own quiet way, QUILTERS tells of the American experience in a uniquely American way. It is not the typical musical: it doesn't rely on choruses of attractive dancers in scant costumes or the simplistic rhymes and rhythms of Tin Pan Alley. Instead, QUILTERS depends on the genuine human experience to relate its tale, one as contemporary as today, yet as traditional as yesterday.

The characters, drawn from the reminiscences of real women, real "quilters," vividly tell of the harsh realities of forging a way of life amid the relentless demands of the prairie. Telling the story of Jewish peasants in tsarist Russia — a scant 20 years after Alexander III's pogroms eliminated thousands of Jews — FIDDLER ON THE ROOF, with its lushly memorable score (featuring "Sunrise, Sunset," "Matchmaker, Matchmaker" and "If I Were A Rich Man") is a truly effective theatrical event, tugging at the audience's collective heart.

But the recurring theme, exemplified by the care and attention given to quilting, is the abiding love of, and devotion to, family. The story centers on the efforts of a mother figure to create a legacy quilt for her six daughters and their children and grandchildren. In the process, the stories of all American women are told in plaintive words set to stirring melodies that recall traditional tunes.

Director Dorothy Marie Robinson brings the show to life with her eloquent direction, a deft blending of acting styles and voices, giving her ensemble an exquisite framework for performance. The seven women in the ensemble are ideally cast, all capable actresses who imbue their myriad characters with warmth and spirit. It's impossible to single out any of the women (Barbara Jean Rogers, Patricia Taber, Rita Rosas, Vickie Wonders Foltz, Sandra Terry, P.C. Denver and Margaret Dill) for special praise, so consistently real are their performances.

Musical accompaniment by Kevin Sutton and Elisabeth Cutler is typically understated, yet moving all the same.


reviewed by JEFF ELLIS
Editor

ANYONE WHO THINKS that dinner theatre is theatre done on the cheap with sub-par production values and less-than-adequate performers, would do well to visit Chaffin's Barn. The skilful production company there consistently brings top shows featuring some of the area's most talented actors to Nashville audiences.

The Barn's new production of FIDDLER ON THE ROOF proves once again that some of the area's best theatre is to be found on the outskirts of the city. Under Michael Edwards' direction, the musical is an entertaining and involving evening, a delight of colorful settings and glorious sounds.

Telling the story of Jewish peasants in pre-revolutionary Russia provide the show's plot. Edwards' Tevye is a world-weary laborer with a somewhat gruff exterior that cloaks a warm, kind heart.

One of the area's leading actors, Edwards might even be considered a star by local standards. Theatres can be filled on the strength of his name alone.

Edwards is given able support by a company of actors that comprise a virtual who's who of local theatre: Rona Carter, engaging and endearing as Tevye's wife Golde; Lari White and Chris Harrod, romantic and moving as Hodel and Perchik, their lovely voices providing the evening's musical highlights; Liz Boswell, funny and somewhat stereotypical as Yente, the matchmaker; Mark DeLaBarre, sweetly awkward as Motel, the poor tailor; with Barbara Laifer and Sondra Morton as Tevye's other daughters.

The cast makes wonderful use of the Barn's in-the-round staging, using a minimum of props and a maximum of lighting techniques to present a FIDDLER that's as good as any production we've seen.
Oh, to be young and evil again

reviewed by SHERRE DRYDEN
Book Editor

AS A NOVEL THE YOUNG AND EVIL is, regrettably, quite unimportant. The early, experimental collaboration of two young men who would later achieve some prominence as editors and critics rather than as novelists, THE YOUNG AND EVIL is too artificial, too self-consciously (and unsuccessfully) modernist to succeed as fiction. These problems aside, THE YOUNG AND EVIL is a fascinating and important addition to the canon of gay and lesbian studies.

Charles Henri Ford grew up in the smalltown south and had decided by age 17 that fame was his chief desire. The route he chose was to publish a poetry magazine: in 1929 he dropped out of high school to launch BLUES: A MAGAZINE OF NEW RHYTHMS.

Probably more because of the timely demise of prominent literary magazines like the dial, the little review and transition that Ford's brilliance or even persistence, literary stars like Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams and H.D. sent their manuscripts to BLUES.

Among the less famous to submit work was the poet Parker Tyler, born in New Orleans but living in Greenwich Village. Tyler's poems appeared in the first issue of BLUES, and Ford corresponded and soon Tyler's name was included on the magazine's masthead as Associate Editor.

Tyler had been in Greenwich Village since 1924, writing and reading his poetry, reviewing books and establishing his reputation with the Village crowd. According to Steven Watson, who provides an excellent introduction to the GPNY edition of THE YOUNG AND EVIL, Tyler's fame was as much a product of his theatrical self-presentation as it was of the words he wrote. He was never simply Parker Tyler, writer, but The Beautiful Poet Parker Tyler, a character in a drama of his own devising.

He used mascara and eyebrow pencil to enhance his beauty, dressed flamboyantly and was notorious for being unable to pass a mirror without checking his appearance. "My dear," Tyler told his lover Charles Boultenhouse, "you wouldn't believe the amount of time I spent on my hair."

When Ford moved to New York in 1930 Tyler met him at Pier 36. That meeting and the next months of ford and Tyler's lives in Greenwich Village are the thinly disguised plot of THE YOUNG AND EVIL. Charles and Parker are renamed Julian and Karel, friends and lovers from the real MacDougal Street become fictional characters Louis, Gabriel and Theodoria. They are all undeniably young, adherents to a cult of youth and beauty. They are evil because they are not moral.

It is unclear who wrote what parts of THE YOUNG AND EVIL. The book roams around stylistically, being sometimes steinEsque, sometimes surrealistic, sometimes merely immature and arrogant. There are moments of extreme eroticism and sexual tension, but the promise is not sustained. The narrative, meant to be modern and unfettered, is just as often gratuitously obscure.

In addition, readers are assumed to have a certain amount of knowledge about the time and Greenwich Village and, particularly, the homosexual subculture. Watson's introduction helps, but more information is required for a complete understanding. Most readers will recognize the drag ball and easily elucidate the novel's opening lines ("Well said the wolf to Little Red Riding Hood no sooner was Karel seated in the Round Table than the impossible happened. There before him stood a fairy prince and one of those mythological creatures known as Lesbians. Won't you join our table? they said in sweet chorus.")

After a time in New York Ford went off to Paris, consoles with the likes of Gertrude Stein and Dina Barnes and met the painter Pavel Tchelitchew, with whom he would spend the rest of his life. He also finished up THE YOUNG AND EVIL, then called LOVE AND JUMP BACK, and got it published by Jack Kahane's Obelisk Press in 1933. Tyler stayed in New York, his shoes "peeling off," eating for free at an artists' club. In 1940 Ford and Tyler began publishing VIEW, "the Modern Magazine." Contributors included Piet Mondrian, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning and Robert Motherwell. Ford navigated the artistic waters so effectively that André Breton, who despised Americans and homosexuals, overlooked Tyler and Ford's membership in both categories and made view the unofficial organ of the Surrealists. Tyler established a reputation as a film critic, one of the first to use Freudian criticism; Ford maintained ties with the avant-garde through the sixties.

DESPITE THEIR contributions to literature, film and art, Ford and Tyler are seldom mentioned in the catalogs of famous homosexuals. Perhaps it was the Greenwich Village '20s, when, Tyler observed, "a homosexual, if he was artistic and intellectual, was just another bohemian," that eventuated their obscurity. Perhaps the obsession with masculinity has led to an assumption that there was little connection between American writers and the New York and Paris homosexual subcultures. Whatever led to their obscurity, perhaps GPNY's reprint edition of THE YOUNG AND EVIL will spur the rediscovery of homosexual voices. The early, experimental collaboration of two young men who were a part of the tremendously important literary and artistic scene of the '20s and '30s. More than anything else THE YOUNG AND EVIL is an artifact, evidence of a recent homosexual past that is decadent rather than seminal, of characters and a time as mysterious and alluring for modern gay men as Natalie Barney's Paris salon is for lesbians.

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Unsettling news of bigotry and shame

TENNESSEANS HAVE HAD unsettling news this week.

Giles Countians are girding for the arrival of members of the Aryan Nation who are travelling to Pulaski — site of the 1865 founding of the Ku Klux Klan — for a march Saturday through the city’s streets.

Admirably, Giles Countians are planning a counter-protest of their own: the 24-hour shut-down of local businesses that should effectively show the interlopers they are not welcome in Tennessee.

People in Nashville last weekend were horrified by the discovery of swastikas and anti-Semitic epithets and slogans painted on the outer walls of a synagogue which serves a large portion of the city’s Jewish population, including several survivors of the Holocaust. The vandals and crude drawings were discovered during the celebration of the Jewish new year, Rosh Hashanah.

Thankfully, the synagogue continued its service to the community, cloaking the hate-filled invectives with canvas until a more permanent cleaning could begin.

Connecting these two events is the bigotry and hatred that is shared by the white supremacists and the anti-Semites. The pledge of intolerance that breathes life into the Aryan Nation’s code of hate is filled with virulent anti-Semitism, racism and homophobia.

The obscenities and profanities of bigotry are far more damaging than those being fought so feverishly by members of the political right wing.

Yet the right wingers have remained oddly close-mouthed about bias crimes and bigotry.

Not so very long ago, the triumvirate of bigotry, hate and mistrust were given horrific new meaning by the actions of Hitler and his henchmen.

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A SCANT 50 YEARS LATER, the debasing actions by the cowardly anti-Semites in their attack on the synagogue last weekend are as horrible to lesbians and gay men as they are to members of the Jewish faith.

It is because we share a history of discrimination and mistreatment.

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Dare

TENNESSEE’S LESBIAN AND GAY NEWSWEEKLY

"I am the Love that dare not speak its name."

— Lord Alfred Douglas, "The Two Loves," 1892

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SOAP BOX

Dare-whacked again

by CAROLE CUNNINGHAM

Staff Writer

IT CAME AS NO SURPRISE that the Bush administration would not be submitting a brief in support of an Illinois law that requires abortion clinics to have facilities that provide the same level of services and support as major hospitals.

On the surface, the law appears to regulate health care quality. But, in fact, it does much more: it places such an economic burden on existing abortion clinics that most would go out of business were the statute upheld.

Those who oppose the law argue that regulating clinics in this way would effectively take away the right to an abortion by forcing the majority of clinics who provide abortions to either shut down or stop providing abortion services and counseling. Meaning that once again, as in the pre-ROE v. WADE era, abortions would be available only to those who could afford the astronomical fees necessary to pay for the non-abortion-related medical equipment the statute requires clinics to purchase.

The Supreme Court therefore has an opportunity this term to either chip away at ROE v. WADE by allowing states to further regulate the abortion industry or the Court may shut the door completely what remains of the right to an abortion by ruling that the Illinois law cannot be unconstitutional because women have no constitutional right to abortion.

The President hopes to support the notion that the Supreme Court’s judicial agenda is beyond the persuasive reach of even the Commander in Chief, a vision of the Court the Bush administration exploited so well in the wake of its ruling on "discrimination in housing. The President made much of his outrage and helplessness in impacting political and rhetorical strategies.

In the Illinois case, Bush knows the Court will either rule in a way that maintains the status quo or that renders the rights secured by ROE v. WADE either void or null and void so beyond the reach of poor women and even middle class women that the right will only remain a right of the privileged. And Bush does not want anyone to believe the Court largely appointed by his predecessor, Ronald Reagan, can be influenced by the opinion of the public or the president. If the public thought they could influence the Court, Bush would find himself in the uncomfortable position of having to take sides in matters he would much rather have substantially out of his hands, particularly at a time when abortion rights activists have successfully made abortion the main campaign issue in a number of city and state elections.

That most Americans believe the Supreme Court rules "objectively" about matters of the law without attention to public opinion, values or mores, is a latent product of high school civics classes in which students were inspired to believe the three sturdy branches of our Federal government were kept in harmonious alignment by a system of "checks and balances." Within that model, the Supreme Court stood as the staunch protector of all that constitutes the "non-abortive-related rights of women." By that standard, the public's silent assent to the overturn of Roe v. Wade would be seen as repugnant. In Bush's republic, they would have been like the philosopher-kings.

On the abortion issue, anti-abortion activists have worked successfully to create a sense in the mind of the public (and the justices are as public as you and me) that abortion is passionately opposed by an overwhelming number of passionate citizens. In their decisions, the Court weighs what it perceives the public historically and presently values and denigrates: read the HARDWICK decision on teachers and the politics influencing the elected officers of the state, immune to the whim of public opinion. The Court seemed to commune with a Truth bigger and better than the lowly senator and entirely inaccessible to the average citizen or foot soldier. In Plato's republic, they would have been like the philosopher-kings.

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Frank affair drags on
by JEFF ELLIS

While an openly gay member of congress struggles for his professional and political life, the prostitute who dealt the crippling blow continues a one-person media campaign to further sully the representative’s reputation.

U.S. Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), remains embroiled in the controversy over his admission of an 18-month relationship with prostitute Steve Gobie. Despite early support from both leaders in Congress and within the Democratic Party — and polls showing strong support for the representative in his home district — support for Frank on some fronts seems to be eroding.

However, leaders of the nation’s two largest lesbian and gay advocacy and political organizations joined last week in support of Frank’s decision to remain in office and to allow the House ethics committee to conduct its investigation.

Leaders of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) and the Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF) voiced continued support of Frank despite the flap.

The controversy began in late August when, during the congressional recess, the fifth-term congressman admitted that he had hired Gobie as his personal assistant, only to fire him two years ago when he discovered Gobie had apparently been selling sex from Frank’s Washington apartment.

Frank’s admission came after Gobie claimed, in a report published in the archconservative Unification Church-owned Washington Times, that Frank had paid him $80 for a 1985 sexual encounter.

Frank said he had procured Gobie’s services through an ad in the Washington Blade, a lesbian and gay newspaper based in the nation’s capital.

Frank admitted that publication of the story might hurt him politically, but that his relationship with Gobie was what prompted him to acknowledge his homosexuality in 1987.

...Heart Strings grosses $156,000

Voters in Frank’s home district, in separate polls, showed overwhelming initial support for their representative. Congressional and Democratic leaders also expressed support for Frank when news of his relationship with Gobie was published.

Since then, however, growing skepticism over Frank’s ability to effectively represent his constituents has prompted some defections, most notably the Boston Globe.

Long considered a staunch supporter and ally of Frank’s congressional agenda, the paper, in an editorial, called on Frank to resign his office.

Subsequent polls have indicated that loyalty among Frank’s constituents is eroding. Gobie further fueled the flames of controversy with an appearance on the syndicated Geraldine Rivera show. On that show, Gobie said Frank used his influence to fix parking tickets for him.

Charges of ticket-fixing notwithstanding, leaders for NGLTF and HRCF say they will continue to support Frank.

“Barney Frank is a crucial advocate for lesbian and gay causes, as well as many other important issues such as civil rights, arms control, civil liberties, elderly concerns, housing and child welfare,” said NGLTF executive director Urvashi Vaid.

“We need him to stay in office for a long, long time,” she added.

Tim McFeely, Vaid’s counterpart at HRCF, echoed the sentiment: “Some have suggested Barney will be less effective for us and others because of the profound harm that his relationship with a prostitute,” McFeely said.

“I think they are wrong; after the ethics committee has completed its work, we will be able to count on Barney as much as ever,” “Barney is entitled to his day before the ethics committee,” Vaid said. “The media has saturated the press and the airwaves on this. Nothing new has happened, so they are now even writing stories about what other newspapers have written.”

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Robin Givens has a few questions

"See, Mike [Tyson] was hanging out on the set quite a bit for a while and a rumor was going around the Paramount lot that he was interested in a girl around here. But there was another rumor, that Mike Tyson and I were lovers and the girl just a front. When you're in bed at night, that hurts. People sayin' you're homosexual and you're not, that's nasty."

— TV chat- lest maven Arsenio Hall whining about people thinking he's queer. Arsenio didn’t say who was in the bed that hurt.

"I think he's probably feeling a lot more pain than any of us will ever feel in our whole lives, and I think that some people find a lot of glee in that."

— Judd Nelson to Arsenio "That hurts" Hall, on the Rob Lowe sex scandal. Not to worry, Arsenio, Judd's promised to not say a word about those Mike Tyson tapes. Unless his career appears to be on the skids and the National Enquirer offers him money.

"The screening for first captain begins the day cadets walk into this place. Each one is constantly measured militarily, academically and athletically. Kristin's appointment has nothing to do with gender. This girl is a piece of work."

— Col. James Hawthorne, director of public affairs at the U.S. Military Academy, on the appointment of Kristin Baker as first captain, West Point's highest honor for cadets.

"I call your lawyer. 2. Explain to her receptionist that she won't get AIDS from talking to you on the telephone. 3. Send your lover on that nine-month Antarctic vacation she or he has always wanted to take; 4. Start drinking Coors publicly; 5. Call Liz Smith and get her to write that you were seen at a benefit mauling some young star of the opposite sex in a corner; 6. Renew your National Review subscription for three more years, and drop a note to Pat and Bill saying, 'It's just not true'; 7. Call the Washington times and offer to spill the dirt on everyone else; 8. Get your name onto an invitation for a Republican Party fundraiser, and make a point of playing blues guitar with Lee Atwater; 9. Go on 'Live at Five' and tell all to that nice Sue Simmons; 10. Call Amy Pagonozi at the New York post, she's hungry for another scoop."

— Ten things you should do when you're unwilling dragged out of the closet by some new magazine in New York City — advice from our wax on dealing with being on the peek-a-boo list.

"The only thing my mother did that I swore I would never do to my children was make me wear mother-daughter dresses. And since my father never had a son, he used to make me play golf with him. Mother-daughter dresses and golf were about the worst things they did to me."

— Wall-adjusted actress Mary Steenburgen, on growing up in North Little Rock, Ark.

"If you think wealth determines genius and poverty otherwise, then look at Dan Quayle and look at me."

— Jesse Jackson, on the obvious.

"In the Jewish way in love and marriage, Maurice Lamm tells us that 'the Bible prohibits homosexual intercourse and labels it an abomination.' He refers to Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. In summarizing Jewish law he said, when a man indulges in homosexual ten­den­cies he commits to­erus, an abomination."

— A letter to the Van­den­held Stiller, Ron Antisoli, Tennessee, char­mer John Mason.

"They're scared of me. I've always said, 'Honey, don't get near my ass.' I'm going to go after some fans and stalk them. I have an Uzi. They'll be so dead they won't know what hit them."

— Madonna-squee and comedienne Sandra Bernhard, explaining why she's not at all worried by the recent spate of threats to ce­lebrities from deranged fans.