

AROUND THE CIRCLE

June 2006

THE NEW SEASON AT CITY CIRCLE

Hello! Thanks for visiting **City Circle Acting Company of Coralville!** Whew, that's one long name! Ah, what's in a name, alas a name by any other name.....Oh wait! Now I am plagiarizing (very badly I might add!) Shakespeare.

Let's do look at our name and who we are. We are **City Circle**, Coralville's premiere community theater company. This non-profit organization began its humble journey in 1997, when a core group of individuals (the founders) looked across the wide Iowa River and set their gaze on the village of Coralville. On the horizon they saw how Coralville was growing from a mid-sized hamlet into a vibrant commercial community while maintaining and nurturing a vital cultural climate. With a gentle helping hand from the city of Coralville, our company has grown as well. Thanks to the support of the community and our hard working members, we are now entering our 9th season. And what a season it is going to be!

To start the year, in recognition of Iowa's 160th anniversary of statehood, we chose to honor one of Iowa's own playwrights, Meredith Wilson. If you guessed **The Music Man**, you are right! We are delighted to be performing once again in the downtown Iowa City historic Englert Civic Theater.

Our organization has had nothing but positive experiences when partnering with other community organizations. Two years ago we partnered with the Iowa Children's Museum and last year for the first time with the Englert Civic Theater. So this year, we said, hey why not combine **City Circle**, the Englert and the Children's Museum and see what we can do. The result: **Seussical the Musical**. The performances will be in the lovely historic Englert Theater, and we will be offering theater workshops all summer long through the lovely Iowa Children's Museum located in the lovely Coral Ridge Mall.

The city of Coralville adores the Holiday Season, and so does **City Circle**. If you get a chance, please visit Coralville during the night of the luminaries. Also, if you are like some of us involved in City Circle, who becomes just a little weary of the everyday holiday fare, you should check out our holiday offering of **Fully Committed**. Founding member Tim Budd will once again grace the stage with his presentation of a not so commercially traditional, however very comical reflection of holiday time.

After the holidays, on the eve of springtime, **City Circle** will host a 3rd Annual New Play Festival. Local

writers are invited to submit original works to be produced and presented on the City Circle stage. Following the 3rd Annual New Play Festival weekend, will be a production of Susan Short Gilbert's original piece "**Catching the Babies**". Susan presented this piece to the public at our first **New Play Festival**, and so many people were so impressed, we have chosen to enter it as a competition piece in Iowa's 2007 AACT Fest in the spring.

Following our return from competition, we are daring to go where we have not gone for 8 seasons. We are venturing into Shakespeare's **Hamlet**. When the season was being selected, the play selection committee said "Hey, why not?" and the board agreed, not only to have a "**Green Eggs and Hamlet**" season but also to give the Bard a try.

To finish the season, we have a **Mystery Musical**. Well, it is not really a mystery. We know what it is, however due to royalty rights domain; we are not allowed to announce it until later this fall. It will have to remain under wraps until the appropriate time, much like the theme of the musical itself!

We are delighted you dropped in and offer many ways for you to show your support. If you would like to become a part of **City Circle**, please visit our web site www.citycircle.org for volunteer opportunities. We are always happy to place members into positions anywhere from behind the stage work to on it! (And only occasionally under it)
Maria Schroeder, 06-07 Season Chair



CHANGE OF SEASONS PARTY



Sweet Sunshine Madness for a little bit of Charity. Actually, my involvement with two of the productions at City Circle Acting Company has hardly been "charity." My name is **Kim Kullmer**. Some of you may or may not know me. I like to think of myself as the 'Asian-Sensation.'" He he, some of you may laugh, but it was honestly not that long ago, that I actually "enjoyed" being Asian (not that I had much of a choice). What does this have to do with Sweet Charity and Little Mary Sunshine? Honestly, very little, but it was the diverse backgrounds and talents that we all shared that made me feel like I was at home.

The wonderful thing about my experience with City Circle is how much I *did* feel at "home." Whether it was the most recent backstage "cold-care" station or just the friendly greetings and smiles, I always felt welcome. I've always been a people person, so naturally my favorite thing about working with City Circle has been meeting new people and making new friends. My involvement with this theatre began when a friend asked me to audition for Sweet Charity. My first reaction to this was; *is he out of his mind??* But not too long after my audition did I realize how much FUN I knew it was going to be.

Being cast in the chorus for Sweet Charity gave me a great opportunity to make new friends with the other lovely ladies 'showin some leg!' to represent the Fandango Ballroom. It was a great experience and I met wonderful people, so I decided to audition for Little Mary Sunshine. It was in this show that I realized the true beauty of performing and community theatre. To me, the beauty of community theatre is about the **people** you meet. The diverse backgrounds of everyone's history is completely amazing-- I swear, someone should write a piece on all of the people's histories and their crazy life stories—but in all honesty, these people that choose to use every spare minute to dedicate to different shows, proves that there is a true love for the *stage*.

As I look back at the past few months, and think of how I spent my evenings dancing with Pringles cans (yes, that was the trick for the croquet mallets, sorry Evie) or tripping over my thoughts as I'd be subdividing and singing those lush alto harmonies, I'm glad to know that it was spent with people that I will never forget and will always appreciate for their talents and wonderful stories backstage. So really, it's about being on and OFF the stage that counts. Thank you!

THANKS FOR A GREAT SEASON # 8!!

What a season it has been! It started last summer with the incomparable **Gypsy** performed at the newly renovated Englert Theatre---a show about vaudeville performed in a theatre with a vaudevillian history. As the season progressed we enjoyed shows at both the Stephan Arnold Studio Theatre and at Oakdale---our **Second Annual New Play Festival, Sweet Charity, Mrs. Cratchett's Wild Christmas Ride, and Little Mary Sunshine.**

There are many persons to thank for their efforts in making the season a successful one. A logical starting point is the many thanks due the actors, musicians, and directing staffs of all the shows. Their commitment involves many long and late hours in the rehearsal process that results in the wonderful shows presented on-stage. Also to be thanked are the hard-working technical staffs and crew members---those unseen geniuses who

help bring the "magic" to each production by their expertise with lights, costumes, sound, props, make-up, and hair-styling. Coordinating all these talented people have been our producers, Chris Okiishi and Rod McCrea, and technical representative and past-producer, Maria Schroeder.

Also to be thanked are City Circle's "front of house" personnel, those folks who work the box office for us at the Coralville Recreation Center, J. Hall Keyboards, and at our performance venues. We also appreciate the help of those who volunteer to usher. Deserving special thanks is Kit Gerken, celebrating her 8th year as our Concessions chair! Also deserving our deep appreciation is another group of City Circle volunteers---those who tirelessly work promoting the season and each show.

Behind all of these activities has been the City Circle Board of Directors. These elected individuals assume a great deal of unheralded work associated with the running of the day to day, show to show, and season to season operations of a vibrant arts organization. Many thanks go to all Board members who have given so much during this season---Michael Stokes, Bill Laubengayer, John Harper, Chris Okiishi, Rod McCrea, Maria Schroeder, Tim Barnes, Tiffany Liebold, Jerry Howe, Dave Redlawsk, Kate Thompson, D.C. Priestersbach, and Brian Gilbert. Also to be acknowledged are our past-and-present Business/Office Managers, Jason Hedden and Jeff Shields.

Finally, a HUGE thanks goes to our audiences. Without audiences there could not be "another opening of another show." I sincerely thank you for your support. See you again in July, for the start of Season #9 where there will be "Green Eggs and Hamlet!"

Penny Hall, City Circle Chairperson, 2004-2006

CITY CIRCLE ACTORS MAKING GOOD!

Andrew Redlawsk, who appeared with City Circle as the Minstral in *Once Upon a Mattress* and as Edgar, The Bat Boy, in *Bat Boy, The Musical*, was named the Outstanding Freshman Theatre Student at Loyola University Chicago, where he is studying acting and enjoying Chicago! Andrew was seen on stage last fall as Dickon, in Loyola's production of *The Secret Garden*, and this spring in a student production of *History of America, Abridged*.

Greg Redlawsk, who has had a number of roles in City Circle productions, including his tour de force as Mrs. Taylor in *Bat Boy*, will be starting at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon this coming fall, where he was awarded a Trustee Talent Scholarship for theatre, which will be his major at Cornell.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SPRIE!

D.C. Priestersbach, founding member and first chairperson of City Circle, was recently honored for his community service. The award was presented during a reception held at the Levitt Center as part of the Older American's Month festivities. Provost Hogan was the speaker and spoke warmly about Sprie, as well as the four other awardees. Congratulations, Sprie, and thank you for all you've done for the City Circle Acting Company!!

Penny Hall



PENNY HALL

That rarest of theatrical treasures. A theatre person who doesn't want to perform.

You won't find her on stage (except that one time, ask Harper). But she'll lead you on a merry chase through the theatre. She'll be in the box office, or behind concessions, or organizing mailings, or in the audience, or greenroom or scene shop, or chairing a meeting, or in rehearsal, or selling tickets, or running deliveries.

Woefully under appreciated, Penny is the heartbeat that keeps us moving forward. Only someone truly devoted to the art and craft of theatre would give so much of themselves for so many years. I shudder when I think of the countless hours spent meeting, organizing, negotiating, prodding, consulting and letter writing.

In thinking about Penny, I find myself getting alliterative with the letter "c". Comforting, cajoling, challenging, chastising. From the first time I set foot in the Iowa City Community Theatre in 1979, there has always been Mrs. Hall.

In a profession that is eyebrow deep with singers and dancers, actors and egos, designers and divas, Penny is the calm eye in a storm of creativity. She has nurtured us without mothering us. When problems arise, her cool head and light touch has steered us through stormy waters to get this theatre established. City Circle Acting Co. would not exist without her.

In the heat of battle, she's been called many things... We are blessed to call her ours.

Susan Short Gilbert

Penny, for all you have done for City Circle Acting Company, we are truly grateful and know that you will continue to have a positive influence on this group. Thank you from the whole group!!!

THE 2006-2007 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The recently elected Officers and Board members took office during the May 18th Board meeting. Those individuals guiding us through our 9th Season will be:

Maria Schroeder---Chairperson
Chris Okiishi---Vice-Chairperson
Eve Adamson---Secretary
John Harper---Treasurer
Penny Hall---Immediate Past-Chair
Chris Okiishi---Acting Producer
William Laubengayer---Acting Technical

Core Representative

Tim Barnes---Artistic Core Representative

Terri Garret---Member at Large for Membership

Jerry Howe---Member at Large for Fund-Raising

Jessica Netolicky---Member at Large for Fund-Raising
David Redlawsk---Member at Large for Fund-Raising
D.C. Spriestersbach---Community Representative
Brian Gilbert---Webmaster

Auditions for "Seussical: the Musical"

Sunday July 30, Monday July 31 and Tuesday August 1
See our website: <http://www.citycircle.org> for more information or call 541-2980.

CABARET

What does it mean in life when one takes risk? For most of us taking risk comes with a certain amount of trepidation about what may change around us from the journey. Both those changes externally in our environment and those changes that take place inside of us in our subconscious and conscious realms. But I personally feel that if one doesn't step out of their comfort zones and take some chances they may never truly find magnificence.

This for me was the journey of Cabaret. City Circle took a risk in producing a show whose stage version is not your typically glitzy musical. But a musical that takes us to the uncomfortable shadow sides of the human existence.

We see in this Cabaret in pre World War II Berlin many of the same issues that we as humans still face today. Prejudice, bigotry, ethical and moral issues and the dilemma of what is absolute truth.

I am of course biased as I reunited with Michael Stokes as his assistant director in this endeavor but I feel the risk paid off. Because of the power of these roles we had many of the most exceptionally talented performers in the area audition for us. Making it with out a doubt some of the most difficult casting decisions we have ever been confronted with as a team.

We assembled some of the best of the best in acting and people who have been the leads in other show for us this season did many of the supporting roles. Their work behind the scenes to find every possible nuance of a character was reflected in the seamlessness of their characters on stage.

It also stretched us as to the maximum as an organization to come up with the highest and some of the best technical work that we could do and possibly have done within the constraints of our time and space. Pushing us to the limits and some times to the breaking point. But from this pushing the envelope came what I feel was a remarkable theatrical experience called Cabaret.

So I thank each and everyone of the cast and crew and the board of directors for their dedication and work on this project and to those of you in the audience that support us with your applause and the price of your admission.

Part of City Circles vision statement is to produce professional quality theater. This risqué, dark side of life tale of Cabaret may have just pushed us one step closer to that vision.

Jerry Howe

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THE TORNDADO, CABARET AND CITY CIRCLE

I am an Alpha Chi Omega and as many of you may know I was one of the victims of the April 13th tornado. I was at rehearsal for Cabaret and that night we were rehearsing at the Children's Museum. We rehearsed through the hail and some of the tornado warning, but finally someone came to take us to the tornado safe zone in the mall. As we headed out of the safe zone to try to get back to work, I got a call from my roommate at the sorority house informing me of the grave situation there. I was shocked and scared, but my fellow cast members were there to comfort me. After realizing that no work was going to get done because of the distraction, Michael cancelled the rest of that evenings rehearsal.

I made my way back to the sorority house, meeting my best friend on the way. The moment I saw the house, from a block away, I took off running. There were people standing around everywhere and it was pitch black because the power was out. Just a few minutes after arriving at the house I got a phone call. I was surprised because the phone lines had been busy since the tornado and I couldn't believe someone had gotten through to me. I opened my phone and it was my good friend Rod McCrea. He said he and Adam Burton were coming over to see if I was all right. I found them at the end of my driveway and instantly felt more calm and safe. After looking around the outside of the house with Rod, Adam and my best friend, Amber, Rod took Amber and I upstairs to my room to see if there was anything I could get out.

We walked into the house through a broken window and made our way to my third floor room. When we opened the fire door to the third floor we were greeted with a thick layer of insulation covering the floor. Carefully we made our way through the hallway to my door. It was slightly ajar, but I couldn't get it much farther open than it was so I slid inside. I looked up and saw a perfect square sky where the ceiling used to be. There were cross beams hanging from wall to floor and electrical and other wiring as well. Rod realized the possible danger of the situation and shooed us back outside. Rod and Adam stayed with me for a while to keep me company and make sure I was handling things well. Both friends offered me a place to stay before leaving to check on other friends. Having them there for me was not only a great show of caring and friendship, but really helped me in dealing with the situation in a calm, optimistic way.

In the weeks that were to come I continued to attend rehearsals and work with the cast on putting together and performing a great show. At rehearsals cast members brought extra clothes and offered anything they had to my cause. One young man even brought me a check from his mother who, not knowing me at all, saw a need and gave out of selflessness and kindness of heart. Michael was patient with me and generously allowed me to go home the weekend of the tornado, causing me to miss load-in and a rehearsal. I could not have asked for a greater cast to help me go through this. I am also grateful that I had the show to help keep me busy and keep my mind occupied with more than just thoughts of the disaster. I am blessed to be a part of City Circle Acting Co. and hope that someday I can return all the good that that Company has done for me.

Rachel Scott