



Our 100th Season - January 2020

The Prompter

Players Guild of Leonia Monthly Newsletter

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again the Drill Hall was transformed into a festive venue for our holiday party, which has been a fun substitute for our general meeting in December for as long as I can recall. This year, after the final performance of *Free to Be You and Me*, a handful of members arrived at the building and in record time moved chairs and risers to accommodate the 70 to 80 people anticipated for the party. It never fails to astonish me what can be accomplished when we work together to get something done. Special thanks to Howard Kerner, Frank Ormers, Steve Moldt, Ralph Martinez, Suzanne Renault, Michael Wurl Larson, Mark Watson and Brian Laub for their hard work that day. With decorative touches by Diane Arabella and Laurette Miller, over the next few days, the stage was set, so to speak, and the party turned out to be a grand success. Thank you to all who helped, and to those who performed. Bravo!

Let's keep the momentum going as we head into this new year and with our next production of *Amadeus*. We need people to volunteer and help add final set construction touches as well as help with lighting, tickets, ushering, etc. So please contact Producers Claudia MacDermott or Suzanne Renaud, or come to the meeting this Thursday to sign up. See you there!

Dan Giordano

UPCOMING DATES:

January 16 Membership Meeting
Workshop by:
Alison Miller

February 7 Opening Night for
AMADEUS plus Post-
show Reception

February 20 Membership Meeting
and Workshop

February 23 Amadeus - closing

March 10 PGL Board Meeting

If you missed the Holiday Party, you can watch it in its entirety via YouTube. Just click on the link to the right, or search "Players Guild of Leonia" on YouTube and it will be the first video on the list.



COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Ad Journal - Beth Parrillo Mark Watson

Budget/Finance - Ralph Martinez

Building/ Facilities - Dan Giordano

Costumes - Diane Arabella, Laurette Miller, Joanne Livelli

Director/Play Selection - Diane Arabella

Historian - Annette Lenge

Hospitality - Diane Arabella

Membership - Bunny Giordano, Laurette Miller, Chris Thorn
Alison Miller

Music/Sound/Video - Chris Thorn

The Prompter - Ralph Martinez, Alison Miller, Nicole Parente

Props - Art Penque

Publicity - John Garbo, Mark Watson

Set Construction - Steve Moldt

Tickets - Lynne Vitale, Bobbi Weintraub

Website - Ralph Martinez

Workshops - Alison Miller, Chris Watson, Angela Cozzi

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Membership discussed our Centennial season and the various ways in which we need to organize and execute a memorable, celebratory season. We now have 4 committees that are seeking help!

1) HISTORY - Annette Lenge - a.lenge@verizon.net.

2) AD JOURNAL - Beth Parrillo (bethparrillo@yahoo.com) and Mark Watson (cwatson1093@gmail.com) - We need help scanning and organizing playbills, memorabilia and photos. Scanning can be done on premise or at home. If interested, please email: a.lenge@verizon.net

3) OUTREACH - Alison Miller -yoginizucchi@gmail.com. Help is needed generating fundraising campaigns, drafting letters of sponsorship, and building morale with local businesses and dignitaries.

4) GALA - Joanne & Steve Moldt - moldts@aol.com. End of the year celebration honoring the Guild's history.

JANUARY WORKSHOP

2020 ignites with a BANG of creativity! January's workshop is a double feature, featuring a sneak peak of *Amadeus*, directed by Kerr Lockhart and *Full Moon Circle*, an original synergy of movement and poetry conceived and performed by Alison Miller. We are looking for new directors to take the helm. If you are interested in directing a workshop, please contact workshop committee or send proposal to Alison Miller at:

yoginizucchini@gmail.com

FREE TO BE YOU AND ME - UPDATE

In many ways *Free to Be You And Me* expressed the very best PGL has to offer. We successfully created a colorful and vibrant 60 min program, professionally executed and genuinely enjoyed by people of all ages; and for some precious few, *Free To Be*, as part of PGL's 100th season, will live on as one of their first memories inside the theater. I take great pride that we could welcome many new families into the folds of our organization and build longer and more extensive bridges into our community. Special thanks to Barbara Davidson and the Leonia Recreation Commission for including us in the annual Tree Lighting Ceremony and to Kim Queren of The Home and School Association for including us in email blasts from the lower schools. Donation bins at the performances were abundantly filled and more than \$1000 was raised for St. Jude's Children's Hospital. Additional funds were also raised for Alex Meyer, a member of our children's chorus, awaiting surgery. Special thanks to a truly glorious production team that includes many novice and seasoned members working together to produce art at its simplest and purest. Thanks to all who came and supported this special creative project at a most busy time of year. And special thanks to the Board and theater at large including this special show as part of our historic 100th season. Sincerely, **Alison Miller (director)**

AMADEUS

We all know AMADEUS by Peter Shaffer. It's a classic. Best picture 1985. Powdered wigs, harpsichords, candelabras. You know, history. Boring. That's what people thought about Alexander Hamilton before he learned to rap. Mozart doesn't rap in the new production by the Players Guild of Leonia, but he has new threads and the same old rude, raucous, rebellious attitude. Just as Shakespeare's plays are often produced with new historical contexts, yet preserving the text, we have placed AMADEUS in a new setting, late 20th century California, where music was an enormous and prosperous business. You may not see powdered wigs, candelabras and harpsichords, but ambition, jealousy, and fear are as evident as ever. Playing Antonio Salieri, the fiercely jealous self-proclaimed mediocrity, is Lawrence Brustofsky, who says about the role, "It's really no different whether I wear a brocaded coat or a black turtleneck sweater. I'm the same bitter guy, sworn to destroy the only person more talented than myself." Mozart is played by Harvard Fraser, new to Players Guild audiences. "Luckily, I'm a musician, so I can play some of the scores for myself to get familiar with them. And now I'm learning to conduct." One of the other changes involve the Venticelli, once played by two middle-aged men, now four women who live from party to party staying up-to-date on all the music business gossip and chatter. But Emperor Joseph is still the beguiling, but oblivious fellow he always was... "There it is!" The music is the same, the clothes and sets are new, and the text has undergone a bit of a California cleanse, eliminating some repetition and unnecessary detail to shorten the running time. "The play has powerful and important things to say about the choices we make in our lives," says director Kerr Lockhart, "but the most important thing is that the audience has a good time and tells their friends. So we are keeping it as lean and fast-moving as we possibly can." Performances are February 7,8,14,15,21 and 22 at 8 PM and February 9,16, and 23rd at 3 PM at Leonia Players Guild, 130 Grand Avenue, Leonia NJ. For ticket information, call 201-947-9606 or visit: brownpapertickets.com/event/4387870.



PGL - 100TH SEASON GALA EVENT

Mark your calendars for **Friday, May 29th** and reserve your spot for a grand evening of fun and celebration, commemorating the PGL's 100th year. The gala will take place at the Excelsior on Rt. 46. Full program will include DJ, dancing, open bar, and a 30-40 minute musical program. More information will be forthcoming!

PGL HOLIDAY PARTY

Congratulations and warm thanks to everyone who attended and assisted in creating, yet, another outstanding PGL traditional holiday party! This year's party was filled with love, friendship, and wonderful performances by many of our talented members. Great food, provided by Bartolomeo's Catering, followed the special holiday workshop performance, and the evening was complete with music & dancing provided by our friends in the Steve Teti Quartet. The Drill Hall was again magically transformed into a lovely holiday party venue, decorated by Diane Arabella with assistance from Laurette Miller and Eric Blood. It was stunning, warm, and impressive to see the Drill Hall's shutters opened with holiday wreaths and table settings that lent warmth and a special holiday spirit to our home. It is always a pleasure to see our membership celebrate together and the event could not be created without the cheerful contributions of Steve Moldt, Frank Osmer, Ralph Martinez, Dan Giordano, Nicole Parente, and Michael Seymour. Thank you to Christine and Mark Watson who assembled the beautiful musical program, in particular to Mark Watson who, again, created this special event that always brings out the holiday spirit in all of our members. Special thanks to our Musical Directors Kerr Lockhart and special guest Director Charlie Greenberg & The Steve Teti Quartet for a truly memorable night of musical performances. All the best to our membership for 2020. Cheers! - **Mark Watson**

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Vince Parrillo joined the Guild in 1971, first appearing onstage as a male lead in several musical workshops (when they were full-scale mini-productions) and then over the years performing both lead and supporting roles in major productions of all genres (most recently in *Lovers and Other Strangers*). Beginning with *Death Takes a Holiday* (1976), his directorial credits for PGL major shows include 5 dramas, 2 comedies, 10 musicals (three of them outdoor productions in Wood Park), and dozens of workshops (most recently O'Neill's *Where the Cross Is Made*). Among the hundreds of actors he has directed were such veterans as Mary Connor, Jeff Kurz, Helene Marshall, Robert Meyer, Scott Peyton, and Rowena Wangenheim. Vince also directed shows in Ridgewood, as well as *The Comedy of Errors* in Overpeck Park (Bergen Shakespeare) and *Carousel* (Summer Stage at Leonia). Five times PGL President, Vince served for many years as Prompter editor and brought in numerous grants to underwrite past outdoor summer productions in Wood Park and, more recently, to cover expenses for repainting the Drill Hall exterior and its deck. Coming up next for Vince is 1) *Follies*, which he says is "a great show to end our 100th anniversary season, given its focus of theatrical and performer memories"; and 2) his sixth PBS film that will be telecast later this year.



Want to be featured in an upcoming issue of the Prompter? Send your pic and bio via email to Ralph Martinez at: rm70art@gmail.com.