

WHAT A DIFFERERECE A WOLF MAKES

Ted Wioncek III & Casey Williams Ficarra

I remember my first children's theatre experience. I was three years old, sporting the ever-stylish OshKosh Overalls, my ADD was out of control and all I wanted to do was catch up with the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. A man walked on stage and told the antsy bunch of kiddies that our host would not come out and play until we "howled" at the top of our lungs. One howl wasn't enough. Two howls and we



Mr. Troll aka Kris Clayton

were almost there. With the third and final howl our eager host appeared at the back of the house, dressed from head to paw in dazzling wolf attire. This wolf wasn't a boring grown up, but a kid just like me. He wasn't adorned in the latest Kids-R-Us fashion but it was close enough! My ADD found its chemical free medication and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles were no longer the coolest thing I had ever seen. I mean, let's face it... turtles are cool, but a wolf... now that's good stuff.

I recently had the pleasure of catching up with an old friend, actress and Ritz Theatre alum, Casey Williams-Ficarra, who undoubtedly masters the art of pontification and offers a note worthy insight to our hot topic.

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The Ritz Theatre Company's new touring puppet show, The Goats, The Troll & The Trash is made possible through the generous support of Subaru of America Foundation and Horizon Foundation

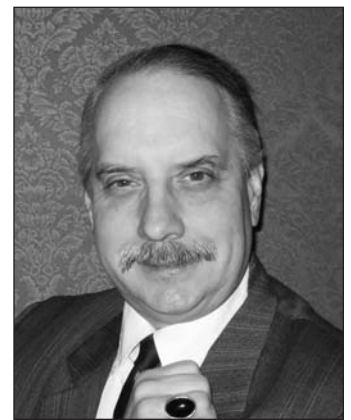
FRANKLY, MY DEAR, YOU'VE NEVER SEEN SCARLET O'HARA QUITE LIKE THIS!

Fred Califano and Art Thompson

"Thespis is indeed smiling on us." says long time actor, director and friend, Arthur Thompson, in response to the recent merger between The Ritz Theatre Company and The Collaborative Act Studio; "We are so lucky to be here as The Ritz stretches her artistic vision and becomes more



than what any of the original Ritz members could have ever dreamed."



Arthur Thompson

An original member himself, Thompson has been with The Ritz Theatre since its inception and is not shy when it comes to verbalizing his fond memories of this theatre. Some would say he is a staple at The Ritz, and that is why it only seems natural to find him cast in The Collaborative Act Studio's (TCAS) season premiere production, Moonlight and Magnolias, as Hollywood screenwriter, Ben Hecht.

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Holman Foundation



SUBARU



Making It Better, Together.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mainstage

The Diary of Anne Frank

April 14 – May 15

Moonlight & Magnolias

June 2 – June 11

Jewtopia

June 16 – June 25

All Shook Up

July 7 – Aug 6

Children's

Chicken Little

June 2 - 4

The Jungle Book

July 12 - 16

WETS

One Night, One Acts

May 4

THE GOODWIN HOLOCAUST MUSEUM GALLERY EXHIBIT

By Christina Forshey

The Goodwin Holocaust Museum and Education Center (GHMEC) stands as a beacon of truth and education for the Delaware Valley. The Goodwin Holocaust Museum, located in Cherry Hill, holds the distinction as the only Holocaust museum in the state of New Jersey. Their mission is to "teach people about the past and educate them for the future through the painful lessons of the Holocaust. The objection is to reduce prejudice and lessen hatred, bigotry, bullying and violence against all groups." The GHMEC offers many programs to educate the community including survivor and eye witness testimonies, theatrical performances, Holocaust movie screenings as well as school programs.



The Ritz Theatre Company is honored to partner with the Goodwin Holocaust Museum to display a traveling exhibit in the Gallery during the run of **The Diary of Anne Frank**. This interactive exhibit will provide a fascinating historical account of Anne Frank's world. The Gallery will be open to the public before, during and after all theatre events from April 14 – May 15. The Ritz invites all patrons to explore this informative exhibit which will highly inspire and inform viewers.



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THE WEDNESDAY EVENING THEATRE SERIES presented by The Ritz Theatre Company & The Collaborative Act Studio



You are invited to the rebirth and presentation of one of our most exciting and beloved attractions... The Wednesday Evening Theatre Series, an evening of charm and sophistication in bare bones fashion!

• **May 4th: One Night, One Acts:** One acts offer the viewer a glimpse into the world of its players. Short, crisp and rare! From classical to modern, we bring you the finest "glimpse" around.

• **September 28th: Play Dates by Sam Wolfson:** From the co-creator of Jewtopia comes a funny, provocative, "perfect date" play.

Play Dates examines love and relationships from childhood through adulthood in the most humorous way possible! Be the first to catch this surefire hit comedy before it heads to the New York stage in 2012!

• **November 9th: Williams on a Wednesday:** Tennessee Williams is best known for his award-winning dramas, *The Glass Menagerie*, *A Streetcar Named Desire* & *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*. But, did you know that same genius mind wrote countless one-acts, short stories and essays? Rediscover the illuminating world and words of Mr. Tennessee Williams as we peel through his most touching and often amusing musings.

ALL PERFORMANCES @ 7:30

ALL TICKETS: \$12.00

Visit our website for information on the history, services, and upcoming events at the Ritz Theatre. www.ritztheatreco.org

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A WOLF MAKES *Continued from page 1*

Why is Children's theatre necessary?

In the words of Williams-Ficarra, "Children's theatre is necessary, not only to introduce today's youth to the art of theatre, but also to enhance their creativity in the form of entertainment and self-expression."

It takes skill and planning to reach the minds of our over stimulated youth. "Ritzy and his friends are unique in that they are keen to keep the kids in the audience engaged and involved by using audience participation throughout their shows. The shows themselves always have a strong message of positivity: of not being afraid to be yourself, of being kind to each other, of doing the right thing. Most of all, the kids are kept active and engaged and most importantly, they always have fun," says Williams-Ficarra.

Casey is just one of the many actors with strong positive feelings towards The Ritz Theatre Company's ongoing cause to expand the minds of our audiences of tomorrow. Her experience with Ritzy and the gang is evident with each and every move she makes on stage. "I learned a lot about Improv: staying alert and really listening to my fellow actors, something I am still able to bring into every show I am a part of!"

Needless to say, my first children's theatre experience was at The Ritz Theatre and my heart has not left since. The seed was planted in this sponge of a young mind. It was not until years later that I made the conscience decision to dive head first into the arts, but I have to believe that in some magical way that this wolf is responsible. I belonged to his tribe, or pack, if you will... and my life will never be the same.



Students of Jennings Elementary School learn how to reduce, reuse and recycle

FRANKLY, MY DEAR, YOU'VE NEVER SEEN SCARLET O'HARA QUITE LIKE THIS! *Continued from page 1*

"I performed in a play written by Ben Hecht, The Front Page, at The Ritz eons ago, and here I am, playing the man himself on this very stage. The Ritz's production quality has always been superb and TCAS is the only other theatre company that has been their equal. The fact that these two companies should play together under one roof is unbelievable. This Summer Stock Season is going to be sensational!" says Thompson.

Moonlight and Magnolias takes place in 1939 Hollywood Land. Three weeks into shooting Gone With the Wind, legendary producer David O. Selznick has shut down production on the largest, most expensive movie to date. The screenplay, you see, just doesn't work. So, what's an all-powerful movie mogul to do? Selznick sends for screenwriter Ben Hecht and pulls director Victor Fleming from the set of The Wizard of Oz. Locking the doors, pulling the shades, and on a diet of bananas and peanuts, the three men labor over five days as they run around the office, acting out all characters to the screenplay that will become the blueprint for one of the most successful and beloved films of all time. Believe it or not, this is a true story and the perfect plot for a play full of punch and panache.



Carrie Share



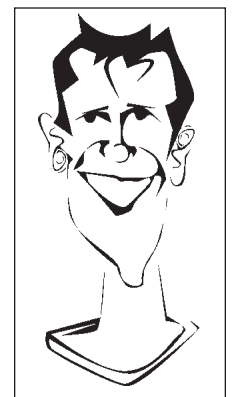
John Jackowski

Thompson is not the only Ritz regular you will find acting out the roles of Margaret Michell's classic novel. In fact, the whole cast of Moonlight and Magnolias recently shared the stage in The Ritz Theatre Company's Arsenic and Old Lace.


Fleshing out the roles of Scarlet, Rhett, Ashley, Prissy and the gang; John Jackowski stars as showman David O. Selznick along with Ernie Jewell as slap happy Director Victor Fleming and Carrie Share as the pretty, frantic and pretty frantic secretary, Mrs. Poppengul.

All four historically based characters work tirelessly to achieve what may seem to some as the impossible, triumph over chaos. Moonlight and Magnolias is about the descent into that chaos, both literally and figuratively. Over the course of this hilarious play, the situation grows steadily out of control until all four highly competent individuals are reduced to quivering wrecks.

"I am not exaggerating when I say that I have never laughed as much as I did when reading this play." To paraphrase the immortal John Barrymore "My only regret is I will not get to see it," says Thompson.



Ernie Jewell

With another company under its wing, The Ritz has become by far the most active theatre in South Jersey. "There is nothing worse than a dark theatre. When The Ritz opened its doors in 1986, it was with a deep love and respect for the theatre and what theatre could and should be. The dream has come to fruition. It is only going to get better from here on. New blood equals new ideas, and hopefully a rejuvenation of spirit within the theatre as a whole. I, for one, am very excited." 

TCAS Summer Stock Season!



Art Talk The Ritz Newsletter

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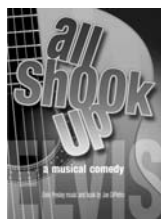


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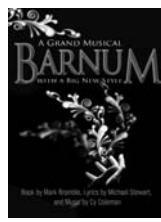
April 14 - May 15



Jul 7 - Aug 6



Sept 8 - Oct 8



Oct 20 - Nov 19

WANTED: VOLUNTEERS

The generous spirit of volunteers is essential to the life of a non-profit organization. If you are interested in volunteering at The Ritz, please contact: 856•858•5230 or Erienne R. Poole email: sales@ritztheatreco.org.



Yes, I Want to Make a Connection with the Ritz Theatre!

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