

THE
ELIZABETH RIVER THEATRE COMPANY

Newsletter 13 / January 2005

AT 40TH STREET STAGE . 809 W 40TH STREET IN NORFOLK FOUNDED IN 2000
(ACROSS COLLEY AVENUE FROM FELLINI'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT)

CALENDAR: THE UNDERPANTS

January 21, 22, 28, 29 (8 PM); 23, 30 (2:30)

February 4, 5, 11, 12 (8 PM); 6, 13 (2:30)

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG

Opens March 4

THE UNDERPANTS

Using Carl STERNHEIM's 1910 comedy, Steve MARTIN has reinvigorated a hilarious farce. Louise Maske, wife of an officious, puritanical bureaucrat, has lost the title character in public - and before long, scandal erupts into spectacle, a "wardrobe malfunction" turns into a chance to cash in on overnight celebrity. With Angie ARESCO, Wade BRINKLEY, Ed CARDEN, Brad McMURRAN, Gerald SCHWARZ, Nicholas THORNBURG and Courtney WOLTER. Designed by Elwood ROBINSON, Rachael SULECKI, Scott QUIRK, Stephanie HORNING and Elliott ROSENBLUM. Directed by Frankie Little HARDIN.

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG

When this play by Suzan-Lori PARKS premiered, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY praised "her fascination with questions of black/white, older brother/younger brother, freedom/slavery, and family myth past/reality present." It went on to win the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and we are excited to bring the work of yet another of America's foremost playwrights today to Hampton Roads. With Beatty BARNES Jr. and Michael LeMELLE. Directed by Jim TURNER.

For information and ticket reservations, call 423-4084 (= 423-40th),
or visit our website at ElizabethRiverTheatre.org

The Beauty and Truth of Art and the Dilemma of Giving
by Dr. Adrienne COQUERAN

Many of us these days are limited in terms of time and financial resources.
But we still understand the need to share our time, talents and money with our local

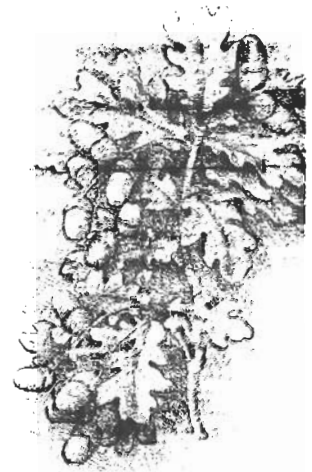
community and humanity as a whole.

But we sometimes wonder, Where would our resources be put to the best use? Since we can't give to many organizations or people - which one will profit humankind the most and give us that sense of purpose and gratification that we've done some good for our community and the world?

We might think with so many people in the world suffering of hunger, severe poverty, homelessness and diseases, should we give to those causes? Is it appropriate to give to cultural institutions such as Public Radio and Public TV, art groups, theatres and museums, when there is so much physical suffering in the world? How does giving to art help?

I feel giving to art helps because art and culture is what defines us as a society, as an age.

It may be impossible to totally eradicate human disease, suffering and poverty in our lifetime... "Your poor you will always have with you". But people who have to deal with these terrible issues day after day may receive a moment of spiritual and cultural uplift and enlightenment by seeing or hearing or imagining and creating a Thing of Beauty. Art helps to take us out of ourselves and our poverty of thought and sense of helplessness; and this can be meaningful to our lives, even if it lasts just a moment, because it may be remembered a lifetime. It may be the very spark we need to move from where we are to a more productive and pleasurable place in time.



The last play staged by ERT, "100", dealt with this very theme. Each character in the play was in a state of transition, a time after death, where they could only move forward after a special memory touched their minds and hearts.

Their memories of disease, suffering and pain kept them in limbo, but once the memory of a "new" place, a sense of love and well-being or an awakening to a universal truth came to mind, they were immediately, mentally and physically, relieved of prior pain and suffering and carried that precious memory with them throughout eternity. This is the memory of the beauty and truth of art.

(Dr. Adrienne Coqueran is a family practitioner, board certified in internal medicine and emergency medicine, and is currently serving on the board of the Elizabeth River Theatre Company. The illustration is "Plant Study/Branch with Acorns" by Leonardo da Vinci, c. 1506)



The Elizabeth River Theatre Company is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization. We appreciate your gift!
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