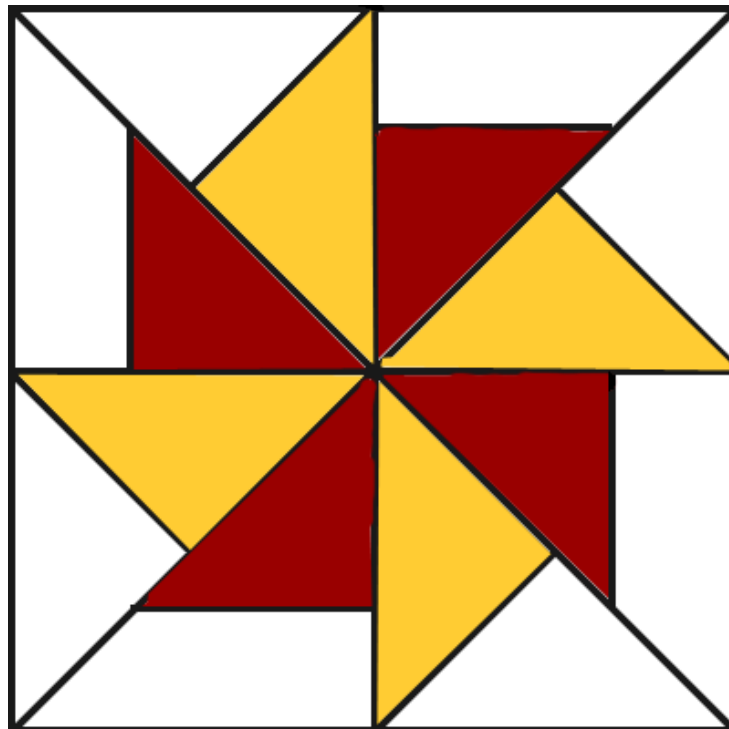


Lex-Ham Community Theater

presents

Quilters



by Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek

8:00 p.m., June 12, 13, 20, 21, 26, 27, and 28

2:00 p.m., June 22, 2003

Weyerhaeuser Auditorium

Landmark Center, St. Paul

Quilters

By Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek
Music and Lyrics by Barbara Damashek

Based on “The Quilters: Women and Domestic Art”
by Patricia Cooper and Norma Bradley Allen

The authors would like gratefully to acknowledge the inspiration derived from the original quilt design “The Sun Sets on Sunbonnet Sue” as designed and executed by the Seamsters Union Local No. 500 of Lawrence, Kansas and the inspiration provided by Grace Snyder and Nellie Snyder Yost in their book *No Time on My Hands*.

The authors would also like gratefully to acknowledge the following text and individuals as invaluable resources in the development of the play: *New Discoveries in American Quilts* by Robert Bishop; *American Quilts and Coverlets* by Robert Bishop and Carleton L. Stafford; Marguerite Ickis; *Letters of a Woman Homesteader* by Elinore Pruitt Stewart; *Our Homes and Their Adornments* by Almon C. Varney; *American Folk Poetry—An Anthology* by Duncan Emrich; *Women’s Diaries of the Westward Journey* by Lillian Schlissel; *Aunt Jane of Kentucky* by Eliza Calvert Hall; *Pioneer Women—Voices from the Kansas Frontier* by Joanna L. Stratton; “The Prairie Home Companion,” Garrison Keilor, Minnesota Public Radio; *A Little Better Than Plumb* by Henry and Janice Holt Giles; *A Harvest Yet to Reap—A History of Prairie Women* by Linda Rasmussen, Lorna Rasmussen, Candace Savage, and Anne Wheeler; and *Wisconsin Death Trip* by Michael Lesy.

Production Staff

Director - Cris Tibbetts
Music Director and pianist - Ruth Blom
Props and Set - Holly Haushalter, Meg Moynihan
Costume Designer - Carolann Winter
Lighting Designer - Dave Reynolds
Technical Director - Randy Seitz
Publicity - Sam Roberts, Amanda Busby
Backup rehearsal pianist - Brian Keenan
Music ensemble - John Kaplan - Bass
Chuck Boody - Hammered dulcimer
Lisa Lee - Violin

Photography - Lila Taft
Producer - Urban Landreman

Please consider becoming a Friend of the Lex-Ham Theater

With support from foundations and government arts agencies to arts organizations such as the Lex-Ham Community Theater down because of budget shortfalls, your financial support is needed more than ever.

Support the activities of the Lex-Ham Community: quality theatrical productions which also build community, acting classes for beginning and advanced children and adults, free informal Shakespeare Reading Series events including a potluck supper. Donations of any amount will be accepted, and are tax-deductible. Everyone who chooses to join our membership program at one of the suggested levels will receive mention in our programs.

A **Family** membership (\$50) will give you a \$1 discount on up to four tickets for each Lex-Ham production. For contributing at the **Sponsor** level (\$100), you will also receive a pair of complementary tickets for the Lex-Ham production of your choice.

Quilters Cast

Sarah McKendree Bonham..... Mary Beth Marier
Her daughters:
Jenny..... Janet Hanson
Lisa..... Lisa Diesslin
Jane..... Erin Duffy
Jody..... Lisa Heutmaker
Margaret..... Kia Erdmann
Dana..... Suzanna Winter

Act I Blocks and Songs

Rocky Road..... Rocky Road
Dugout..... Little Babes
Babies Blocks..... Thread the Needle
Childbirth
Rebel Patch..... Cornelia Song
Windmill..... Windmill
Robbing Peter to Pay Paul
Baptism..... Washed in the Blood
Butterfly..... Butterfly Song
Schoolhouse..... Pieces of Children's Lives
..... Green, Green, Green
Four Doves in the Window..... The Needle's Eye

10 minute intermission

Act II

Lone Star..... Quiltin' and Dreamin'
Double Wedding Rings..... Pieces of Lives
Secret Drawer
Log Cabin..... Every Log in My House
Country Cross Roads..... Never Grow Old
..... Who Will Count The Stitches
Crosses and Losses..... The Lord Don't Rain Down Manna
..... Dandelion
Tree of Life..... Everything Has a Tune
..... Pieces of Lives
..... Hands All Around

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I confess. I can't sew on a button, or thread a needle. Nor can I sing or dance. I grew up in a small Minnesota town in the 1970s and '80s, and I don't remember a time without TV, electricity, and indoor plumbing. So I may seem an unlikely choice to direct this musical about pioneer women who find their strength and salvation during the hard times of settling the prairie through the artistry, the order, and the ordinariness of quilting. But that would be a facile judgment. Because while I never could sew or sing, what I can (and could always) do well is listen to the stories the people around me were telling—sometimes telling me, often times telling others without being aware of me—and find a creative way of sharing those stories with others. What resounds in my heart as I read this script, is that these are not simply stories of the frontier, or reminiscences of women who sewed well. They are stories of humanity and family to which all of us can relate. Many of the stories you see today are true—and told verbatim from interviews with pioneer women in the early 1970's. All of them are real, and all of them are lovely. Thank you for coming. Enjoy.

—Cris Tibbetts

Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek

Molly Newman began her playwriting career as co-author of *Quilters*, for which she was nominated for a Tony Award, and a Helen Hayes Award. *Quilters* and her second play *Shooting Stars* have been produced at several regional theaters including The Mark Taper Forum, Actor's Theatre of Louisville, Houston' Alley Theatre, The Kennedy Center, The Denver Center Theatre Company, and The Pittsburgh Public Theatre. Other writing credits include the play *Yves*, and the television comedies *The Larry Sanders Show* and *Frasier*.

Barbara Damashek has worked extensively in the American regional theater as a director, composer-lyricist and writer. Local credits include the American premiere of *Silence* at the Magic Theatre and *The Cherry Orchard* at A.C.T. Her original plays include *Whereabouts Unknown* (Susan Smith Blackburn Finalist) and *Two Suitcases*. She is perhaps best known nationally for her musical *Quilters*, developed at the Denver Center, for which she received three Tony Nominations (Best Director, Best Book and Best Original Score). She has directed this work additionally at the Edinburgh Festival, The Pittsburgh Public Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum and the Jack Lawrence Theatre in New York. Other directing credits include works at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Santa Cruz and South Coast Repertory. She has also worked at Syracuse Stage, where she directed *The Dybbuk*. Ms. Damashek has worked with the Berkeley Repertory Theater where she has directed *Rhinoceros* by Eugene Ionesco and John Guare's *House of Blue Leaves*.



Bertha Corbett Melcher Creator of Sunbonnet Sue

Bertha Corbett Melcher is credited as a creator of the Sunbonnet designs. She illustrated children's Primer books in the early 1900s. Her book, "The Sunbonnet Babies" was published in 1900. In this book she depicted girls with their faces hidden by their bonnets.

Her first book caught the attention of Eulalie Osgood Grover, a writer of Children's school primers. Bertha was hired as the illustrator of Ms. Grover's primers.

The collaboration between Ms. Grover and Bertha Corbett lasted for many years, through many different Primer books. These books were wildly popular and read by school children across the country.

www.SunbonnetSue.com

Some History of the Double Wedding Rings

The first known quilt made with a Double Wedding Ring like pattern is in the Shelburne Museum, dated 1825-50. But the pattern appears to have been rarely used until the 1920s. Part of the difficulty in tracing the earlier use of this pattern is the fact that over time it was made under around 40 different names. Just a few are; Rainbow, Around the World, Pickle Dish, Coiled Rattlesnake, Endless Chain, King Tut and Friendship Knot. The great variety of names illustrates how differently the pattern was visualized in various periods and regions. In reading an early diary or letter we might easily find the pattern under another name. We can't be sure if the writer was really referring to a Double Wedding Ring like pattern or not.

It appears that in early quilts of this pattern the pieces of the rings were first sewn together then appliquéd on solid fabric. Around the beginning of the 20th century women began to make it as a pieced quilt.



Whatever the method it was a difficult quilt to make. Carrie A. Hall wrote down her this opinion on the Double Wedding Ring in her 1935 book, *"Real quilt enthusiasts delight in this all-over pattern but it is hardly the design for the novice to undertake."*

Throughout the 30s and 40s the Double Wedding Ring quilt had become quite common. Several newspapers and magazines published patterns and articles about it. Kits were sold with the fabrics pre-cut. Even fairs got into the enthusiasm about this pattern sometimes putting Double Wedding Ring quilts into a special category.

www.WomenFolk.com

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Ruth Blom (Music Director and Pianist) Ruth is making her first community theatre appearance in many years. She has been involved in past theatre productions outside of the Twin Cities as actress, assistant director, music director, and pianist. One of her favorite acting experiences was *Tintypes* but she has also worked with *Streets of New York*, *No, No, Nanette*, *Music Man*, *Streetcar Named Desire*, *The King and I*, *Barefoot In The Park*, *Sound of Music*, and others. *Quilters* has been a wonderful experience and working with this cast and director has been marvelous.

Lisa Diesslin (Lisa) is joining Lex-Ham for the first time. She brings an extensive background in music and theater, having appeared in numerous productions throughout the U.S. Since returning to Minnesota, Lisa has portrayed Amnesia in both *Nunsense* (Lakeshore and Oops!) and *Nunsense II* (Oops!), appeared in *She Loves Me* and *The Magic of Christmas* (Woodbury), and music directed *Forum*, *Nunsense* and *Brigadoon* (Heritage). In real life, Lisa works for the Minnesota Legislature. Lisa dedicates this performance to the memory of her mom, Evelyn, who was an accomplished quilter.

Erin Duffy (Jane) Erin is excited to be part of Lex-Ham's production of *Quilters* and to be working again with two of her dearest friends, Cris and Janet. Erin is a member of the Nautilus Music-Theatre in St. Paul. She performed the role of Nancy in the Central Minnesota Children's Theatre production of *Oliver*. She has also been seen in *Madeline's Rescue* and *Mr. Popper's Penguins* at The Children's Theatre Company of Minneapolis, *Quilt* at Theatre in the Round, *Sondheim: A Celebration* at Bloomington Civic Theatre, *Phantom* at Riverside Theatre, *The Children's Hour* at the MacPhail Center for the Performing Arts, and Minnesota Opera's premier of *Bok Choy Variations*. Erin has performed on the West Coast in *Nine*, *Evita* and *Godspell*. When not acting on stage, Erin performs cabaret. Her cabaret act has been seen in the Twin Cities, Atlantic City, San Francisco, France and the Italian Riviera. After *Quilters*, she's off to the Cabaret Conference at Yale University.

Kia Erdmann (Margaret) Kia is thrilled to finally be a Quilter. Since graduating from Milikin University with her B.F.A. in Acting, Kia has worked with CLIMB Theatre as an Actor/Educator and as a Performance Company member. She has also performed in *The Comedy of Errors* at the Guthrie, *The Candid Bio of a Chess Table...* at the 2002 Fringe Festival and Bryant Lake Bowl with Shantz Theater, and *My Sister in This House* with Theatre Unbound. Kia would like to thank her family, the Petite Fours, Mark, and God—who helped these great women survive on that prairie.

Janet Hanson (Jenny) Janet has appeared extensively with many theatres locally and elsewhere, including the following: Troupe America: Doris Walker in national tour of *Miracle on 34th Street*. With Minnesota Musical Theatre:

Marian in *The Music Man*. At the Great America History Theatre: Paula Harmon in *Gangster Musical*; Zelda in *Scott & Zelda: the beautiful fools*; Janice in *Let Heaven & Nature Sing*. With The Children's Theatre Company: Mrs. Lundquist in *Mr. Popper's Penguins*; Mrs. Darling in *Peter Pan*; Nancy Nitpicker in *Lyle the Crocodile*; Madame Thin in *Madeline's Rescue*. At Derby Dinner Playhouse: Irene Molloy in *Hello Dolly*; Sheila in *A Chorus Line*. With Kentucky Shakespeare Festival: Kate in *Taming of the Shrew*; Emilia in *Othello*. Janet has an MFA from the University of Louisville.

Lisa Heutmaker (Jody) *Quilters* is Lisa's first show with Lex-Ham. In the distance past she's played such roles as Nellie in *South Pacific*; Reno Sweeney in *Anything Goes*; Babe in *Pajama Game* to name a few. Lisa and her hubby Jeff (and Alex their Yellow Lab) live in Cottage Grove and spend most of their free time hunting, camping, fishing, golfing, shooting, bowling, and of course singing! Lisa sings with a choral group called WORLD VOICES when she's not on stage and is currently an Assistant Director – State Filings at Northland Insurance Company. Hugs and Kisses to my charming husband for all his love and support during this show...and to the Cast of *Quilters*, Cris, and Ruthie...it's been my privilege to work with you. Thanks everyone.

Mary Beth Marier (Sarah) Mary Beth is appearing in her third Lex-Ham show, her most recent being the Divas and Dining event last fall. She has also sung at local churches and in numerous IHM-St. Luke School productions. Mary Beth plays the role of mother of five in real life, grateful that life is so much less complicated in the 21st century (Ha!). God is good and grace abounds—thanks to the girls who have gone without Mom for a month.

Cristopher Tibbetts (Director) Cris spent last summer with “all boys,” playing John/James in *Love! Valour! Compassion!* in Madison, WI, so he's happy spending this summer directing the talented ladies of *Quilters*. This is Cris' fourth show for Lex-Ham, having previously directed *Bullets and Beauties*, *The Vegetable*, and *Love Letters*. Other recent directing credits include *Oliver!* and *John and Jen*. Cris dedicates his work on this production to his grandmas, Evelyn Olson and Bertha Elmhirst, who sewed together the pieces of his life and passed down a beautiful legacy, and to John Pikala, who “makes the light shine.”



Suzanna Winter (Dana) made her stage debut at Theatre in the Round Players in *Thieves' Carnival* in 1984. She has since become a frequent performer in the arena, where her credits include Mary Warren in *The Crucible*, Eva in *Kindertransport*, and Jennie Mae in *The Diviners*. She has also performed with La Comedia Dinner Theatre, Paul Bunyan Playhouse, and the Great American History Theatre, and her favorite credits include Maria in *West Side Story*, Elma in *Bus Stop*, Chava in *Fiddler on the Roof*, and Jenny in Stephen Sondheim's *Company*. She played Darlene in the long-running musical *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* at the Plymouth Playhouse, and she can be heard on the International recording of Bjorn Hallman's *Solitar* with the Royal Swedish Opera. Suzanna studied at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in her heart's hometown, New York City. Much love and thanks to my favorite pioneer, Carolann Winter.

Carolann Winter (Costumes) Carolann is the costumer for student productions at the University of St. Thomas and the College of St. Catherine where she also teaches Make-up and Costume. Her design experiences include many shows at Theatre-in-the-Round and other local community theatres. She has also stitched for The Minnesota Opera, The Ordway Center for Performing Arts, and Chanhassen Dinner Theatres. Her interests include supporting new and innovative theatre companies in the area.



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John Pikala

Lex-Ham Community Theater

Since its start in 1995, the Lex-Ham Community Theater has striven to achieve its mission of producing quality theatrical experiences by and for the residents of the Lexington-Hamline and surrounding neighborhoods in St. Paul. The company has enhanced the local theatrical scene by

- Selecting lesser-known works by noted playwrights, such as *Soul Gone Home* by Langston Hughes and *The Vegetable* by F. Scott Fitzgerald,
- Giving the regional and world premieres of works by local authors, such as *Bullets and Beauties* by Urban Landreman, and
- Reviving wonderful classics such as *The Philadelphia Story* by Philip Barry and *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly.

All of its shows have provided people with little previous experience an opportunity to be on-stage or work off-stage side by side with those who have more experience.

Finally, the company strives to help build community by involving people across generations and walks of life with each of its productions.

The theater is further involved with the community by offering acting classes through St. Paul Community Education and holding free informal Shakespeare Reading Series events.

Call (651) 644-3366 to get involved.

Check out the Lex-Ham Community Theater's web site at:
www.LexHamArts.org/theater

Shakespeare Reading Series

Join neighbors and friends for an informal reading of *Henry V*
at 6:30 p.m., Friday, July 11, 2003, 1184 Portland Avenue, Saint Paul

6:30 p.m. – potluck supper

7:00 p.m. – sit down and read the play

Parts are reassigned at the start of each scene, so everyone gets lots of opportunities to read.
Please bring your own copy of the play

Lex-Ham Community Theater

Upcoming shows in the 2003 Season

November: James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl

Auditions: September 13 and 15