

TARTUFFE alias "The Preacher"

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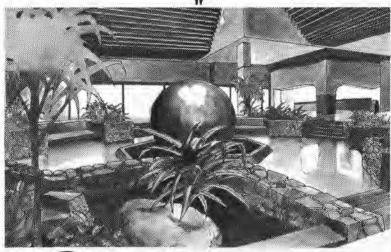


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GeVa Theatre To Renovate Naval Armory For New Home

GeVa Theatre plans to renovate the Naval Armory in downtown Rochester as its new home. Jerome Dienstag, chairman of the board, and Howard J. Millman, producing director, made the announcement at a press conference held December 2 on the set of the theatre's second production of the season. The Gin Game.

The theatre will have to raise \$2.5 million to finance the renovation of the armory, which was the city's cultural center until 1930 and has been vacant for the past few years. An option to purchase the armory from the city for \$1, was approved by the City Council December 14.

Plans for the new theatre, which GeVa hopes will be ready for the opening of its season in the fall of 1984, include:

- a 500 seat mainstage theatre
- a 200-250 seat second theatre
- · a restaurant-cabaret

The National Endowment for the Arts has thrown its support behind the project by awarding GeVa a \$30,000 grant to help defray architectural fees for designing the new theatre building. GeVa has also received a \$10,000 grant from the Gannett Foundation to pay for an architectural and engineering feasibility study of the armory.

The Rochester firm of Lawson, Knapp & Pulver has been selected as architect for the project. GeVa will also retain a consultant with special expertise in theatre construction.

"We chose the armory because it is ideally situated and because it can be immediately and permanently ours," said Dienstag. "We looked at more than a dozen sites. The armory was the one place that could fulfill all our basic requirements. It will provide a lively, exciting atmosphere for theatre goers and will satisfy the needs of the artistic and administrative staffs for a reasonable price. We also think that the armory will qualify for the National Register of Historic Places."

Said Millman, "We're doing more than renovating a building here. This project benefits the community as a whole, and I think that's what the National Endowment saw in this project. Aside from providing Rochester with a new theatre facility, we're giving new life to an historic structure and, with the Strong Museum, anchoring the southern rim of downtown."

The armory is in an area of downtown which is enjoying a renaissance. The building, consisting of 38,000 square feet, is located on the south side of Washington Square Park, adjacent to the Clinton Avenue exit ramp of 490 West. The City of Rochester's Downtown Festival site, which drew 350,000 persons this past summer for a variety of events, is next door to the armory. The Strong Museum, which attracted 30,000 visitors in its first month of operation and expects to draw 200,000 persons each year, is one block east.

GeVa Theatre is experiencing dramatic growth in audience. The number of subscribers increased significantly in the past year — from 3700 in 1981-82 to over 5300 in 1982-83. Performances had to be added to the run of each play to accommodate new subscribers. Millman is projecting 7000-7500 subscribers by 1983-84 and 10,000-15,000 by the time the

new theatre building opens.





The Naval Armory, which has, in the past, been known as the State Arsenal and Convention Hall, was built in 1868. Artists such as Enrico Caruso, Arturo Toscanini, Anna Pavlova, Jascha Heifetz, Isadora Duncan, Ignace Paderewski and Pablo Casals performed there. The armory was also the site of political conventions, drawing such speakers as Franklin D. Roosevelt, William Jennings Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. A proposal to include the Naval Armory in the National Register of Historic Places is now under consideration.

The firm of Lawson, Knapp & Pulver have impressive credentials in theatrical work and the renovation and preservation of historically significant buildings. They received one of the four top Design Awards given by the Rochester chapter of American Institute of Architects for their renovation of the 100-year-old, 6000-seat amphitheatre on the grounds of Chautauqua Institution. Previously they were awarded an A.I.A. Citation of Merit for renovation of The Ontario County Historical Museum in Canandaigua, originally designed by Claude Bragdon in 1913. The firm's townhouse project in the center of the historic district at Chautauqua received a New York State A.I.A. Design Award and was featured in the A.I.A. Journal and in the Annual of American Architecture, both national publications.

Three years ago, the firm helped re-design the present GeVa Theatre. Their current projects include a new 200-seat

intimate theatre and renovation of an opera house.

GeVa has been located at 168 South Clinton Avenue, across from the armory on the east side of Washington Square Park, since the theatre began operation in 1973. A developer has an option to demolish the building to make way for an office tower. The option may be exercised as early as April 1983 but is now expected to be exercised in April 1984.

About the Play

Robert Strane and Eberle Thomas's *Tartuffe, alias "The Preacher"* is an adaptation of Moliere's 17th century comic masterpiece *Tartuffe.* As an adaptation this American version, set in post Civil War Kentucky, does not look upon the French original as an assured blueprint for comic success nor does it rest on clever paralleling of character or event.

Rather it looks to the underlying premises of Moliere's play, concerning itself with the contradiction between appearance and reality that Moliere explored for his audience some three centuries earlier. In changing the time and the literal context of the play, the adaptation succeeds in a different kind of artistic fidelity to Moliere's satire.

Moliere presented his *Tartuffe* in 1669 when France was barely recovering from a long period of fratricidal religious wars. The American version is set in 1870. In both periods bigotry, irrational passion and suppressed fears were ripe for manipulation and men such a Tartuffe could prosper.

In the French play, he is a lay director of conscience consolidating a strictly temporal control over the family and fortunes of Organ Pernell. In the American version, he is a Bible thumping preacher exuding an evangelical fervor so intense that he converts Pernell, a war hero. In both plays it is the relationship between Tartuffe and Organ, the symbionic relationship of hypocrisy and delusion, that is central to Moliere's view of human nature and basix to the full exercise of his comic power.

Once Tartuffe's hold over Organ is established, both comedies move swiftly. Organ brushes aside his promise to wed his daughter to the man she loves and pledges her to Tartuffe. Incensed by his son's charge that Tartuffe is out to seduce Elmire, his wife, Organ disinherits the young man in a fit of unreasoning fury. It is Elmire's clever ploy that ultimately opens Organ's eyes but it is an insight that comes almost too late. Tartuffe plays a vicious trump card that nearly destroys both Organ and his whole family.

Only the direct intervention of Louis XIV in the original and President U.S. Grant in the adaptation saves Organ from prison and restores a sense of harmony and moderation in

keeping with those values comedy endorses.

GeVa Theatre

HOWARD J. MILLMAN, Producing Director presents

TARTUFFE Alias "The Preacher"

An American Version of Moliere's Play

EBERLE THOMAS and ROBERT STRANE

Directed by

EBERLE THOMAS

XEROX CORPORATION

Featuring

DANIEL AHEARN JOHN STERLING ARNOLD JAY BELL LANCER BOYD BRIAN COUGHLIN SAYLOR CRESWELL NICK FRANCESCO KATHLEEN KLEIN PHILIP LESTRANGE MONIQUE MORGAN JOHN QUINN LON SALZMAN ANNA DEAVERE SMITH JOYCE SULLIVAN

Set Designed by

Costumes Designed by

Lighting Designed by

RICK PIKE PAME

PAMELA SCOFIELD

WALTER R. UHRMAN

Original Score by

Stage Manager

JOHN FRANCESCHINA

JAMES STEPHEN SULANOWSKI

Casting by

DAVID TOCHTERMAN

Hair Styles by
PAUL LYONS

December 30, 1982 through January 23, 1983

This performance is made possible, in part, with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency.

CAST

The Family and Their Friends;

ORGAN PERNELL Jay Bell
ELMIRA, Organ's second wife Kathleen Klein
DAMIS, Organ's son Saylor Creswell
MARY ANNE, Organ's daughter Monique Morgan
MRS. PERNELL, Organ's mother Joyce Sullivan
CLEANCE, Elmira's brother Philip LeStrange
VALERY, in love with Mary Anne Daniel Ahearn
DOREEN, a servantAnna Deavere Smith
Strangers in the House:
TARTUFFE John Sterling Arnold
LAWRENCE, his discipleLancer Boyd
Representatives of Law and Order:
A MAJOR IN THE U.S. ARMY John Quinn
A CORPORAL IN THE U.S. ARMY. Lon Salzman
A PROCESS-SERVER Brian Coughlin
THE PRESIDENTNick Francesco

The action of the play takes place in the home of Organ Pernell in Kentucky during the course of a single day in 1870

There will be a single 15-minute intermission.

Special thanks to

William Wandersee of The Paper Store Larry Popwych for his invaluable assistance on *The Gin Game*

Artistic Company



DANIEL AHEARN (Valery) was educated at the University of Maryland and Carnegie Tech. He spent three seasons at the Arena Stage in Washington D.C., where he appeared in Mother Courage with Viveca Lindfors and the world premiere of Pueblo with Shep Strudwick, Mr. Ahearn has performed in theatres in Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Hamburg and Amsterdam. He appears frequently on daytime television. His most recent roles on stage in New York are Jean in Miss Julie and Arthur in Billy Liar.



JOHN STERLING ARNOLD (Tartuffe) is a member of the Actors Equity Association and the Screen Actors Guild and holds a Master of Fine Arts in Acting from Wayne State University. Some of his professional credits include Cyrano De Bergerac, King Lear, Death of a Salesman, A Christmas Carol, The Lion in Winter, Indians, Philadelphia Story, The Sound of Music, South Pacific, Tobacco Road, and the Off-Broadway production of Macbeth with Rip Torn and Geraldine Page.

He has acted in and directed plays throughout the United States and has wide-ranging theatrical credits in regional theatre, touring companies. summer stock, dinner theatre, and outdoor dramas. Arnold's film credits include the butler in Rainbow Pictures' production of the *Phantom of the Red House* and appeared with Forrest Tucker, Larry Storch and Brock Peters in the Sunn-Schick production of *Huckleberry Finn*.

Arnold has directed for Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri; the Southern Shakespeare Repertory Company, Miami, Florida; Playhouse 3100, Richmond, Virginia; and Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

His directing credits include the productions of The Fantastiks, You Know I Can't Hear You When The Water's Running, The World of Carl Sandburg, Charley's Aunt, Macbeth, The Odd Couple, Julius Caesar, and Bury the Dead.

During the winter months, Arnold is the Tour Manager for Theatre West Virginia, the touring branch of Theatre Arts of West Virginia, Inc. Last summer, Arnold took a leave of absence from his position as director of outdoor dramas in Beckley, W. Va., to perform the role of Norman Thayer in On Golden Pond in the Stephens College production at Spirit Lake, Iowa.



JAY BELL (Organ) comes to the GeVa Theatre directly from his critically acclaimed performances in Artichoke and Blithe Spirit at Theatre 40 in Los Angeles. Prior to that he was at The Alley Theatre in Houston playing Dr. Treves in The Elephant Man and Artie in The House of Blue Leaves. Dozens of character parts have taken him from the classics in such repertory companies as The Asolo State Theatre, The Barter Theatre, The Bucks County Playhouse and The Alley to contemporary plays in New York, Los Angeles and stock and

Shoots People George Kamper



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