



SLOC Spotlight

SCHENECTADY LIGHT OPERA CO. NEWSLETTER • VOL. 35-5

MARCH, 2002

The cast and crew of ***Ruthless!*** have been hard at work polishing this jewel in the SLOC 75th Anniversary Season. *Ruthless!* is a musical farce based on two melodramatic cinema classics, *The Bad Seed* and *All About Eve*. Originally performed off-Broadway, *Ruthless!* was nominated for best musical by the Outer Critics in 1993. The show went on to open in Los Angeles with costumes by Bob Mackie and cameo voice appearances by Bernadette Peters and Bob Newhart. It is the story of Tina Denmark, a talented girl who doesn't get the lead in her school play, *Pippi Goes To Tahiti*. Tina wants that part and nothing will stop her, not even another actress getting the lead in the show. Tina shows her true ruthlessness in perfect comedic style. Act II takes another twist when Tina's mother Judy, now known as Ginger DelMarco, takes her daughter's turn in the limelight. The dialogue is fast, witty and biting; the situations outrageous. The music, composed by Marvin Laird who is the arranger for some of the biggest talents such as Bernadette Peters, spans musical styles from torch songs to character songs. *Ruthless!* pokes fun at Broadway, televi-

RUTHLESS! THE MUSICAL



The Ruthless! family portrait (left to right): Joan Horgan (Judy Demark), Gwen Fraser (Lita Encore) and Meredith Bull (Tina Denmark).

sion, and cinema, and will keep you laughing the whole time. Opening night is March 7, 2002 and you can be sure that every one who is anyone will be present to see "Where Tina Gets it From". If you can't make opening night, you have more opportunities to see Tina and her friends from March 8th through the 17th. Great seats are still available especially for the added performance Saturday March 16th at 2:00PM! Get a little *Ruthless!* yourself and call Paige at 377 - 5101 to reserve the best seats in the house!



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7 pm, Tuesday, March 12**

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✓ Check out our Website at <http://www.sloctheater.com>



President's Part — by Melissa Lacijan

Semi-Annual Meeting

- SLOC's Semi-Annual Meeting and Potluck Supper were held on January 26th. The 75th Anniversary Committee, led by Bonnie Williams, decorated the Opera House beautifully, creating a warm, inviting stage for the open mic performances. Those of us who attended were treated to a variety of lovely performances by soloists, duos and quartets. I was very pleased to present this year's Etta Moore Award to Varro and Jean Clarke for all of their years of service and support to SLOC.

Community Involvement

SLOC stepped up to help another community group in January when we participated in Spotlight Players' fundraiser for their new theater. Spotlight invited all of the area theater groups to perform in a cabaret to help raise the money they need to renovate their newly acquired theater in Rensselaer. SLOC performers Don Edmunds, Joan Horgan, Judi Merriam, Erin Selkis and Bonnie Williams volunteered their time to perform numbers from several SLOC shows. I played emcee for our group and spoke a bit about SLOC and our 75 year history. We played to a small but enthusiastic audience and had a lot of fun. We wish Spotlight Players lots of luck with their new home.

Damn Yankees Auditions

I was very encouraged to see a large turnout for the *Damn Yankees* auditions in early February. There were some very talented newcomers mixed in with the familiar faces. I'm sure Debbie May and her staff were thrilled to have so many "heavy hitters" from which to choose. I'm looking forward to watching the show take shape this spring.

Rehearsing *Ruthless!*

After I left the *Damn Yankees* auditions, I popped upstairs to watch a little of the *Ruthless!* rehearsal. Those of us familiar with Joan Horgan will love seeing her in this role – it's quite a departure from others she has played. Make sure you reserve your seats for *Ruthless!* soon – it's going to be a fantastic show you won't want to miss!



The Board of Directors announced SLOC's 2002-2003 season at the Semi-Annual Meeting.

Next season will open with Stephen Sondheim's *Company*, the story of a thirty-something single man and his well-intentioned friends' attempts to ensure his future happiness. Thomas Dalton Bambury will be directing this sophisticated comedy.

Michael Mensching will be making his SLOC directorial debut in December with *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. This hilarious show follows the slave Pseudolus and his attempts to help his young master win the hand of a beautiful courtesan.

If teen romance films of the Elvis era are to your liking, be sure to see *Zombie Prom* in March. Tom Heckert will be directing this production, which features a 50's rock-n-roll score, giddy romance,

and nuclear paranoia. This wonderful show won rave reviews when it was done at the Theater Barn a couple of summers ago – don't miss it!

Our final production of next season is *City of Angels*, directed by Barbara Mahlmann. This clever, jazzy musical about life in 1940's Hollywood features the stories of a young screenwriter and the film noir world of his imagination. *City of Angels* won 6 Tony Awards, including Best Musical and Best Score.

This year's Show Selection Committee had a very difficult task, as there were over 35 shows submitted by 12 different directors. Much thanks to committee head Elisa Harrington-Verb and her team for all of their hard work.



SLOC Spotlight

SLOC Spotlight is a newsletter of the Schenectady Light Opera Company, P. O. Box 1006, Schenectady, NY 12301. SLOC is a community volunteer musical and theatre arts incorporated, nonprofit organization. Governed by a Board of Directors elected by the membership, SLOC's purpose is to foster light opera and related arts for the people in and around Schenectady County, NY.

Newsletter Staff: Jill Coloney, Jennifer S. Depew, Tom Heckert, Jackie Mosher, and Greg Rucinski.

Subscription Rates: \$5 per year, check payable to SLOC. Send subscription inquiries and address changes to the address listed above.

OPERA HOUSE Phone: 393-5732

DEADLINE for submissions to **Vol. 35 Issue No. 6** of the SLOC SPOTLIGHT is April 11, 2002. **Issue No. 6** will be mailed by April 23, 2002.

Please submit your articles to Jill Coloney at jac12661@aol.com or 92 Cooks Court, Waterford, NY 12188. If you would like help with your article, please feel free to contact any of the newsletter staff.

"damn yankees"

Damn Yankees Cast Announced



Producers Gary Carter and Ron Fish along with Director Debbie May have announced the following cast for SLOC's fourth jewel of its Diamond Anniversary season :

Applegate: Steven Leifer, Lola: Heather D'Arcy, Young Joe: Peter Tyger, Rocky: Andy Maycock, Old Joe: Frank Pickus, Meg: Amy Czach, VanBuren: Joe Malone, Gloria: Pat Brady, Sister: Debi Weiskopf, Doris: Christine Vermilyea, Welch: John Quinnan, Wife: Kate Saccone, Ball Players: Andy Maycock, David Spencer, Mark Slaver, Joe Carusone, Matt Harvey, and Brendan McDermott.

Production staff includes: Musical Director, David Cash; Choreographer, Lee Ryan; Lighting Designer, Ken Zarnoch; Property Designer, Jodi Gilman; Costumer, Connie Rowe; Assistant Costumer, Vickie Shatley; Set Designer, Debbie McDermott; Set Construction, Don Counterline; Sound Designer, Dave Wilkinson; Make-up Designers, Dave Harrison and Marcia Lenehan.

For a devilishly good time come watch the Senators play those *Damn Yankees*. Games will be played at Schenectady Light Opera House beginning May 3rd and continuing on through the closing on May 12, 2002. Call Della Gilman (280-8076) for your tickets before the game is sold out!

Semi-Annual Meeting a Fabulous Evening For All

On Saturday night, January 26th, SLOC hosted its Semi-Annual Meeting. Far from being a routine business meeting, this gathering turned out to be a real party. There were plenty of delicious foods, decorations galore, and the theater was dressed up for a fabulous open microphone night.

Melissa Lacijan, our President, announced our 76th season of shows and presented the Etta Moore Award to Varro and Jean Clarke. (See related articles.) There were three prizes given: the door prize of two tickets to our Gala Dinner was won by Alix North; two tickets to our next show, *Ruthless!*, went to Walter Raab for having the oldest SLOC sweatshirt (Annie-1984); and Eleanor Pigliavento won 5 Diamond Pendant raffle tickets for having the most interesting outfit (the 70th Anniversary sweatshirt with all of the names of the past SLOC shows).

Festivities continued with open mic night. Brett Putnam acted as the emcee, Kate Burns and Joanne Mensching were our pianists, and 15 songs were sung by and for the 70 or so gathered SLOC members. Performances ranged from humorous to melancholy - nostalgic to modern. While most of the performances were solos, we were treated to several duets and one quartet who sang an outstanding a capella number that had the house cheering.

Kudos to the 75th Anniversary Committee (Deb and Eric Weiskopf, Bonnie Williams, Mary Kozlowski, Jodi Gilman, Paula and Bob Farquharson, and Brett Putnam) and Michelle Sausa -Gatta, Sally Farrell, and Elizabeth Picker for putting together (and cleaning up) such a terrific evening.



75th Anniversary Gala Dinner

••••• Invitations have been mailed for SLOC's 75th Gala Dinner. We ••••• hope that you will be able to attend this party as we celebrate ••••• 75 years of quality musical theatre in the Capital District. ••••• The Gala will be Saturday, April 13, 2002, at the Edison Club ••••• in Rexford. Cocktails will be served at 6:00 PM followed by ••••• dinner at 7:00 P.M. Music for the evening will be provided by ••••• Mike Purcell. Put on your "Sunday Clothes" and plan to attend ••••• and have fun...there may be a few surprises. Seating is ••••• limited, so if you are coming, please return your invitation by ••••• March 15th. The cost is \$30 per person. If you have any ••••• questions, or did not receive an invitation, please contact ••••• Bonnie Williams at 459-4985. •••••



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RUTHLESS! THE MUSICAL

March 8-10 and 14-17.
Thursday, Friday, Saturday @ 8:00PM
Sundays and Saturday, March 16 @ 2:00PM
(See Feature article on page 1)

TICKETS: 377-5101

Adults - \$18
Children under 13 - \$9
Group rates available! Call for Information.



Etta Moore Award Goes To Varro and Jean Clarke



Producer, set designer, usher, ticket sales, actor, and "flier" - just a few of the titles Jean and Varro Clarke have held during their 40 years as SLOC members!

Jean and Varro produced the first show we performed at Proctor's Theater, as well as the last show held there. When the Company moved to Niskayuna High School, Varro was VP Audience Services and Jean was in charge of patron membership and ushers.

Over the course of their "careers" at SLOC, Varro has served as stage manager for 33 shows, headed several set construction teams, and was responsible for the system that allowed Peter Pan to fly! Jean was ticket chairperson for many years, prop person for 2 shows, and continues to chair tickets for at least 1 show per season. Together they have worked on set design, stage crew, ushering, cabarets, served on the Board, and even performed on stage for 1 show! With the amount of time they spent at SLOC, it's no wonder their 2 sons, Jack and Scott, were involved on and off stage as well!

It is because of this level of commitment to the Opera Company that they were chosen in a secret ballot by the Board as this year's recipient of the Etta Moore Award. As one Board member stated, "...they're the type of people SLOC is made up of." Congratulations and many thanks to Jean and Varro Clarke!

The Newsletter Staff is compiling a list of quality people and things that turned 75 during our 2001-2002 season. For example, Proctor's Theater, Godiva Chocolates, and many of our relatives! If you have ideas for this list, please share them with Jill Coloney at jac12661@aol.com or 371-9348.

New Directories Available!

SLOC has updated its directory. The new directory includes updated information as well as e-mail addresses. Copies will be mailed to all members in the near future.