

FORT SMITH LITTLE THEATRE



SPOTLIGHT

401 North 6th Street

March 30, 2023

www.fslt.org

Dates: Opening Night of *Dilemmas with Dinner* will be Thursday, April 13. Regular evening performances will be April 14-15 and 19-22. The matinee will be Sunday, April 16.

Show Times: Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. Patrons may be seated after 6:45 p.m. The matinee begins at 2:00 p.m. Patrons may be seated after 1:15 p.m.

Season Flex Pass Seat Selection:

Seat selection begins 7:00 a.m.

Saturday, April 1 for Flex Pass patrons. Select seats online at fslt.org or call the Box Office at 479-783-2966 (extn. 2) to request seats on the phone. Flex Pass patrons may also purchase an additional ticket for every pass they have.

General Public Tickets: General public tickets available beginning 7:00 a.m. **Thursday, April 6.** Purchase online at fslt.org or call the Box Office at 479-783-2966 (extn. 2) to purchase on the phone. Opening Night tickets \$20. All other performances \$12.

Box Office Phone Calls: Be prepared to leave a message with details about your seat/ticket request including a phone number where you can easily be reached. Volunteers will return calls during variable hours.

Atten: Flex Pass Patrons

Your 2023 pass code was included in the email you received when you purchased your Pass. That code is required to select your seats online. If you don't know your code, and it does not appear when you log in for seat selection, a Box Office volunteer can provide it to you on the phone.

Fort Smith Little Theatre Presents

DILEMMAS with DINNER

APRIL 13-22

A farce in two acts by Robin Roberts. Directed by Tina Dale

TICKETS: WWW.FSLT.ORG 479-783-2966

ENERGETIC COMEDY OPENS APRIL 13 AT FSLT DILEMMAS WITH DINNER

"SUCKING UP IS SUCKING UP." "YEAH, BUT AT LEAST YOU'RE DOING IT WITH CLASS. YOU'RE SUCKING UP WITH SILVER." -- BROOKE AND JULIA FROM *DILEMMAS WITH DINNER*



Strong women are front and center in the energetic farce *Dilemmas with Dinner* that opens April 13 at Fort Smith Little Theatre. The comedy written by Robin Roberts and directed by Tina Dale, features a cast of FSLT favorites.

Set in the early 1990s, *Dilemmas* follows the struggles of junior executive Brooke (Monica Longoria) who is striving for a long-sought-after work promotion. With the help of a young caterer Caren (Ashleigh Mathews) and Brooke's loyal assistant Julia (Rikke Black), Brooke is throwing an elegant dinner party for her arrogant but dim boss, Will (George Mann), and his snooty wife Louise (Lora Rice).

Unfortunately, Donny (Ian Miller), Brooke's bookstore owner husband has injured his back thanks to an accident caused by his lovable but klutzy assistant Max (Eric Wells). Despite the

See *Dilemmas with Dinner* on page 3



Hospitality Gets Helping Hand

A big loud shout out to the **Western Arkansas Community Foundation**. Charles Belt, Hospitality Committee Chairman, shows off a beverage refrigerator that is part of the hospitality equipment purchased with their gift. New tablecloths, folding chairs, and serving trays will also be financed by their donation.



Director's Letter



My life has been anything but stagnant over the past few years. It seems like I have been bombarded with challenges. Still, I decided I should add an even bigger challenge to the mix. I love a good farce. I love to watch them. I love to perform in them. It made perfect sense to me then that I would love to direct one. Therefore, I submitted *Dilemmas with Dinner*, a farce that has never been performed in our theater, for the 2023 FSLT season. And thus began one of my biggest

challenges to date.

Fortunately, I was assistant director for Carole Rogers when she directed *Money Matters*, which taught me a great deal. And my good friends who have directed farces in the past have been happy to share pointers and give great advice. I knew going in that timing and planning would be crucial. I have found it is even more so than I imagined. But one of the key things I have learned in my time at FSLT is that if you surround yourself with the very best crew and cast, your job is much easier.

I am so thankful to be working with some veteran actors, including George Mann in his first non-musical play, who are just amazing on stage and willing to go the extra mile to make sure this play is comically entertaining for everyone who sees it. Need a good laugh? Make your plans to come see our show. I am certain you will love it as much as I do.

-Tina Dale, Director



Seating Late Arrivals

To minimize disruption for patrons and actors, those arriving after curtain time will be seated only at a suitable break in the performance. It is also possible that you may be placed

in a more accessible seat then moved to your purchased seat at intermission. Seating after a performance has begun is subject to the discretion of FSLT. Thank you for your cooperation.

Dilemmas with Dinner opens April 13

help of Julia's bartender boyfriend Stephen (John Hall), one disaster after another gets in the way of Brooke's perfect party. The final straw? Brooke learns at the last moment that her caterer Caren is her boss's much disliked ex-daughter-in-law. Disasters keep coming as Brooke and her friends try to serve dinner and keep the boss and caterer separated.

Director Tina Dale has an experienced stage crew supporting her including Grace Andrews, assistant director; Joe Graham, producer; Audra Sargent, stage manager; and Gary Cameron, set design. The set construction crew includes Gary Cameron, Scott Black, Brett Short and Coleman Smith. Sharla Cameron is in charge of props and Sandra McPherson serves as costumer. Show running crew includes Nicole Bostick and Lexi Housley. Show art is designed by Scott Black. Logan Davis serves as light designer. Tina Dale and Gary Cameron are in charge of sound design and sound booth respectively.

Dale is excited to bring this comedy to FSLT: "This play spoke to me the minute I read it. It's the fast-paced incredibly funny farce I enjoy, but it also honors women fighting to break the glass ceiling. It's a very comical homage to our grandmothers, aunts and mothers who took up the fight before us. It's also a way to show our daughters, nieces and granddaughters that reaching for the stars can get a little painful and crazy sometimes, but it's always worth it."

Performer Ian Miller enjoys playing physical comedy as bookstore owner Donny. "I just love comedies and discovering comic characters," he said. "The physicality of my character is the biggest challenge for me in this show."

Cast member Ashleigh Mathews is also enjoying the physical challenges of her role. "Caren does a lot of physical comedy. Juggling dishes, trays full of appetizers, running back and forth from the kitchen to

the dining area! That's really what got me interested in playing her."

Monica Longoria is enjoying the challenge of playing Brooke: "Brooke is career-oriented and wants to be seen in her company. This character is very relatable and fun."

Lora Rice (Louise) explains that she doesn't have to stop for dinner before rehearsal: "'Louise takes an appetizer' is in the script instructions 12 times!"

Dilemmas with Dinner opens at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 13 followed by evening performances April 14-15 and 19-22. A matinee is scheduled for 2 p.m. Sunday, April 16. Opening Night tickets (including a champagne reception preshow and dessert at intermission) are \$20; all others performances are \$12. Season Flex Pass patrons can begin selecting seats at 7 am Saturday April 1. Tickets go on sale to the general public at 7 am Thursday April 6. Purchase tickets/select seats online at fslt.org or call 479-783-2966 (extn. 2) to purchase through a box office volunteer.

Director Dale concludes, "In a farce, timing is everything – entrances, exits, line delivery, even facial reactions must be timed. In this show, we also have to time the use of props and eating on stage. After all, you can't say your line with a crab puff in your mouth. Speaking of time – we hope you'll select a time to attend *Dilemmas with Dinner*. It's one dinner party you won't want to miss."



Sip Sip Hooray!

Oh the excitement of Opening Night! Courtesy of **Sodie's Wine and Spirits**, quality wine and champagne is served pre-show. At intermission, a special dessert is served along with brew from **Fort Smith Coffee**. Tickets are \$20. By calling the Box Office, Flex Pass and Wednesday Night Subscribers can attend Opening Night for only \$8.

Remembering Lindy

We appreciate the donation from Steve and Connie Thomas given in memory of Lindy Cotner who was a member of our theatre family for many years.

Let's Hear It For Hennessy

Thanks to the **William T. and May P. Hennessy Foundation**, an oversized projection screen was purchased for the recent set of *Kindergarten*. This flexible piece of equipment is sure to be used for years to come. Additionally, intercom equipment was installed in our light booth. We are grateful to the Foundation for their continued support!

Seat Tickets Checked By Ushers

If you selected your seats online, you can bypass the Box Office when you arrive and show your print-at-home ticket or your ticket confirmation on your smart phone to an usher. Alternately, go to the Box Office upon your arrival, pick up your seat ticket, then proceed to an usher at either aisle.

Permanently at Pebley

Luckily our FSLT predecessors were memorabilia hoarders! In celebration of our 75th Anniversary in 2022, we collected and organized mountains of photos, newsletters and programs. We are happy to report that our history files are now archived at the **UAFS Pebley Center**. Located in the UAFS Boreham Library, this wonderful resource collects historical materials significant to the history of this region. Thank you to the Pebley Center for keeping a well-trained and watchful eye over our precious files so they will be readily available for our 100th!

Fort Smith Little Theatre
SPOTLIGHT

P.O. Box 3752, Fort Smith, AR 72913

www.fslt.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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From the Top...

Each night as I clean the kitchen, I think about the “gunk in the sink”; being an adult is dirty work, but somebody’s got to do it. And when another driver whips in to grab the only available parking space on a Saturday at Sam’s – I take a deep breath and ask myself if it’s a problem or an inconvenience. Now, if you don’t get the meaning of those comments – then regrettably you missed seeing our last production, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. Thank you to the cast and crew for bringing to life those beautiful, thought provoking vignettes.

After those meaningful life lessons, we followed up with an off-season show, *FSLT’s Improv Review*. This improv production was a first for FSLT; the quick thinking talent blew us away and everyone had a ball!

What’s next you ask? It’s *Dilemmas with Dinner*, a comic farce that will open April 13. Director Tina Dale says this is one dinner party you won’t want to miss.

During intermission at a recent production, a patron told me they had lived in the River Valley for more than a decade and had never before attended one of our shows. They were impressed by our theatre and the talent on the stage, and intended to come again. I was delighted by their compliments, of course, but it also made me think. FSLT is a Fort Smith gem that even after 75 years, is still unknown to many in the area. Personally, I’m going to make an effort to introduce FSLT to others, to forward a theatre email or facebook post to someone who I think could use some entertainment, a good laugh, or an idea for date night. I hope you will do the same. Let’s not keep this gem to ourselves. Laughter is the best medicine, and we want everyone to be healthy!

– Joanne Peterson, *President*

AUDITIONS – Join The Fun!

Auditions for *Deathtrap*, directed by Micki Voelkel, will be held at 7 p.m. on **Monday, April 24**. Callbacks will be Tuesday, April 25. The cast calls for 3 males approximately 25-55+ years of age and 2 females approximately 40-60+. Production dates are June 1-10. In this production, a famous playwright, struggling with a string of failures, sees a student’s script as a potential Broadway smash. Can he resist the temptation to knock off the author and present the play as his own? Full of twists and turns, this comic thriller played on Broadway for four years and was an acclaimed 1983 film starring Michael Caine and Christopher Reeve.



Season Flex Pass patrons are urged to select seats before April 6.