

Steel Magnolias



by
Robert Harling

Directed
by
Elliot Weiner



October 18th-November 3rd, 2013
Fridays & Saturdays 7:30pm
Sundays 2:00pm

TACOMA
Little
THEATRE

SINCE 1918

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A Note from the Artistic Director

Welcome to Tacoma Little Theatre!

Thank you for choosing to be a part of 95 years of theatre history here in Tacoma. We are one of the oldest continuously operating community theatres in the United States. Can you believe that we are just five short years away from our 100th birthday? This is the beginning of an exciting time for us as we start to plan for our centennial celebration.

As many of you are aware, this is my first year as Managing Artistic Director at TLT, and the warmth with which I've been welcomed has been overwhelming. I've enjoyed meeting many of you and am looking forward to building friendships and partnerships for years to come.

We here at TLT are committed to bringing you the theatre you want to see, and the theatre you didn't know you wanted to see. This year we've lined up a series of productions that will be sure to entertain you. Thank you for trusting in our programming. If you aren't already, think about becoming a Season Ticket or a FLEX pass holder. Not only will you get a great deal on your tickets, you'll also become a member of the family here at TLT. Take a look at the series of shows listed in our program and I know that you will be amazed at what this season holds.

All my best,
Chris Serface
Managing Artistic Director

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210 N I Street
Tacoma, WA 98403
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Steel Magnolias



by Robert Harling

Directed by Elliot Weiner

Cast of Characters

Truvy Jones..... Stephanie Leeper
Annelle DuPuy-DeSoto Jessica Robins
Clairee Belcher.....Dana Galagan
Shelby Eatenton-Latcherie Gretchen Boyt
M'Lynn Eatenton.....Kathi Aleman
Ouiser Boudreaux Carol Richmond

Place: Truvy's Beauty Salon, a renovated carport
Chinquapin Parish, Louisiana

Act I: Scene 1: April
Scene 2: December

-15 Minute Intermission-

Act II: Scene 1: June, 18 months later
Scene 2: November

Originally produced by the W.P.A. Theatre, New York City, 1987

(Kyle Renick, Artistic Director)

Steel Magnolias is produced through special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc. New York, NY

www.dramatists.com

Artistic Staff

Director	Elliot Weiner
Assistant Director/Stage Manager.....	Nena Curley
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Madison Austin
Resident Costume Designer.....	Michele Graves
Resident Scenic Design & Master Carpenter.....	Blake R. York
Lighting Design	Matt Lawrence
Properties Manager	Katelyn Simpson
Charge Scenic Artist.....	Brie Yost
Sound Design.....	Elliot Weiner & Nena Curley
Sound Board Technician	Kelty Pierce
Hair and Wig Consultant.....	Jeffery Weaver
Dialect Coach.....	Lynn Harper Nelson
Photography.....	DK Photography
Graphic Design.....	Maria Kadile Konop

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Bella

Director's Note

Every good writing teacher I've had, whether for stage or film, and that's been many over the last 50 years, has said: *"Above all, write what you know. Write what you feel."*

Nowhere is that more true than with Robert Harling's *Steel Magnolias*. Harling didn't make things up just to get laughs – or tears. He didn't work things into some formula. After his sister Susan, the real life Shelby, died from diabetic complications after having a baby against medical advice, he was devastated, locked himself away for 10 days and wrote: "It just poured out into my typewriter in a 24/7 tsunami of Southernness. I had no idea what I'd written. I asked the first person I gave it to if it even looked like a play."

His play leapt from off-Broadway to film, with actors like Bette Davis taking him to tea so she could pitch playing Ouiser. You've probably seen the film, quite the ensemble cast!

Finding that TLT ensemble and doing whatever I can as a director to help them become a "stage family" has been my most meaningful role – these six wonderfully talented actors have made that easy – and so pleasurable! Nena and the entire team have made it happen seamlessly, so you can sit back and enjoy. Please read about all of them in this program.

Steel Magnolias does not have a collection of clever special effects. No complicated set revolves. We, as their friends, get to watch six people who really care about each other spend time together in Truvy's Beauty Salon.

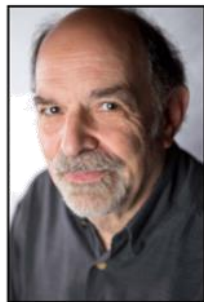
We watch Harling's sister (Shelby) and his mother (M'Lynn) share their joy and pain about her wedding and the baby. We eavesdrop on den-mother, Truvy, as she takes the town's newcomer, Annelle, under her wing and helps her grow from scared young thing into a stronger woman. We share in the loving battle between old, old friends Clairee and Ouiser as they lighten the mood and fight to be Queen-of-the-Salon.

The essence of *Steel Magnolias* is that it's real, so true to people we all know, even if we don't live in Chinquapin (Chik-ah-pin) Parish (or the real-life Natchitoches, LA where Harling and his family lived). Interesting fact: Harling agreed to write his play for film mainly because the producer agreed to shoot it in Harling's home town – pop. 16,664. Imagine bowling next to Julia Roberts. Having a potluck with Sally Field. The staunch Republicans even put out "Dukakis for President" signs because Olympia Dukakis' cousin, Mike, was running for President.

Steel Magnolias, the play, has more than endured. It has grown in popularity across the world. The relationships are genuine whether we're talking about six friends in Tacoma or Auckland or Venice. Beauty salons are universal. So is the enduring love of these six magnolias.

At a 25th anniversary performance of his play, Robert Harling said: **"Listen to the voices of those you love, and, if you're lucky, you'll hear them forever."**

Elliot Weiner, Director



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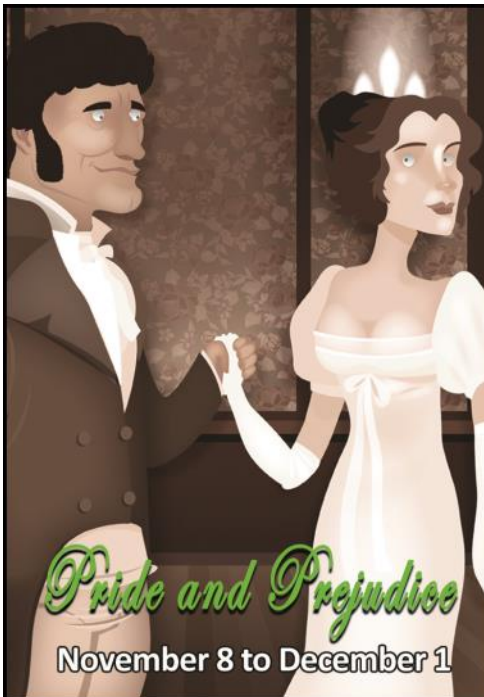
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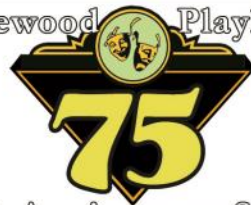
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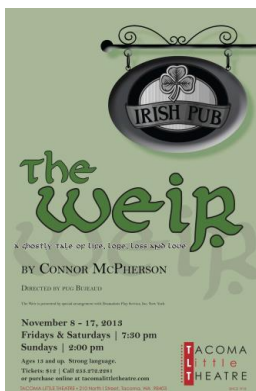
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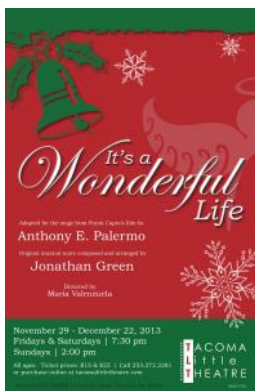
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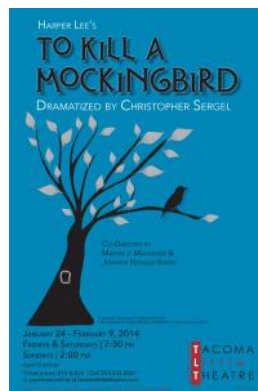
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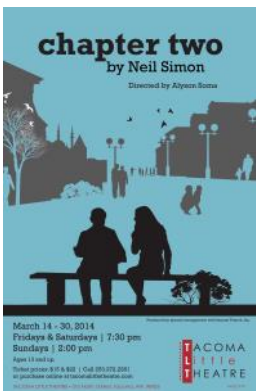
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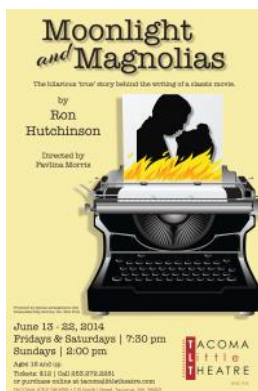
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MARCH 30, 2014



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JUNE 1, 2014



JUNE 13-
JUNE 22, 2014

Cast Biographies



Stephanie Leeper (Truvy Jones)

Stephanie Leeper is thrilled to be part of such an amazing cast and crew! She has a BFA in Musical Theatre and has been performing for over 20 years at various venues including the 5th Avenue Theatre, Civic Light Opera, Tacoma Little Theatre, Auburn Avenue Theater and Renton Civic Theatre. Favorite roles at TLT include Maria Elena in *The Buddy Holly Story*, Maggie in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and Angel in *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*.

I would give anything to return to the days of my Grandma Selma (who lived to be almost 94!) crimping my hair in her kitchen. You see, I sat on my hair from age 11-15 and was known as "the girl with the really long hair." I loved the 1980's "big hair" look and Grandma would spend literally hours crimping each section of my hair, which gave us the chance to talk. I was the luckiest of all the grandchildren because I learned so much about Grandma's youth, beliefs and our family history. It was during these "hairstyling sessions" that she taught me Life lessons that have influenced and inspired the choices that I've made in my life thus far. "To thine own self be true," being my favorite one. :-)



Jessica Robins (Annelle DuPuy-DeSoto)

Jessica is a new addition to the Pacific Northwest, and is excited to join the talented cast of *Steel Magnolias* for her first show with Tacoma Little Theatre. Recent credits include *Oliver!* with Snoqualmie Forest Theater, and *World's Fair* with Jet City Improv. She would like to thank her family for their love and extreme patience.

When I was about seven or eight years old, we were visiting my aunt at Christmas time. She had never had children and I always got the sense that she didn't quite know how to interact with us, so I always tried to show off all the cool stuff I could do as a way of breaking the ice. This particular Christmas, I chose to show her my most recent trick of being able to walk backward really, really well. Just like Michael Jackson! So I got her attention and began 'moonwalking,' when suddenly my long hair ignited on a Christmas candle on the windowsill. I was completely oblivious to the situation as her face suddenly filled with alarm and she rushed over, beating at the flames with her hand. The air filled with the horrible stench of burning hair and pieces of black ash rained down in front of my face as I wondered what I had done so horribly wrong to make her hit me like that. Her quick thinking saved my life and I'm happy to report that my hair made a full recovery!



Dana Galagan (Clairee Belcher)

Dana was last seen on TLT's stage in *California Suite*. Last season she played Jo Cobot in TAO's all female cast of *Reservoir Dogs*. On the heels of that production she was stage manager for TLT's *Little Shop of Horrors*.

In the early 80's, during the unfortunate perm years, I wished for a hairstyle like Ann and Nancy Wilson of Heart. Instead, my roundish perm more closely resembled Jimi Hendrix. Rolling with it, I tied a psychedelic scarf around my head and rocked it like Jimi. Thank goodness for hair that grows quickly.

Cast Biographies



Gretchen Boyt (Shelby Eatenton-Latcherie)

Gretchen is excited to return to Tacoma Little Theatre after having played Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors* this past spring. Other favorite roles include Sophie Rauschmeyer in *Star Spangled Girl* and Desdemona in *Othello*. Gretchen feels so lucky to share the stage with such talented women and to have the opportunity to learn under the direction of Elliot Weiner again.

The year was 1996, I was in 5th grade and was what could only be categorized as a tomboy. I had begun the school year with long beautiful blonde hair but decided to cut it off to above the shoulder the way I can only imagine was an attempt not to have to brush it as often. I thought my hair looked fine, not fashionable but fine until one fateful evening. I had been allowed to stay up late on the weekend and was watching Leno with my family when the new pop sensation Hanson came on to perform their single "MmmBop". The boys crooned and the camera panned around the band when finally it came to the youngest, Zac, on the drums. As soon as I saw him I exclaimed, "Hey he looks like me!" The rest of the family collectively gasped finally accepting what I think we already knew deep down ... I was officially living as a boy. Incidentally it was also the last time we took a family portrait.



Kathi Aleman (M'Lynn)

Kathi is delighted to be back at TLT, where she previously performed in *California Suite*. She has most recently been hard at work with Assemblage Theater, appearing in their Northwest premiers of *Terminus* and *Bluebeard*.

One of my most prized possessions is my first drivers license because in the photo I have perfect straight hair. To achieve that look, I would slather my hair with dippity -do and wrap it around my head, secured with long silver clips, and then roll the top on soup cans and somehow sleep that way! On my driver's license my 16 year old self smiles out, looking like Cher's fair haired twin. Bliss.



Carol Richmond (Ouiser Boudreaux)

Carol is beyond thrilled to share this wonderful experience with the best cast, crew and director ever! Carol has performed in theatres from Olympia to Redmond, in roles such as Amelia Tilford in *The Children's Hour* (Lakewood Playhouse), Fraulein Schneider in *Cabaret* (SecondStory Rep), Bubbie in *Crossing Delancey* (Renton Civic), and Kate Jerome in *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (Capital Playhouse).

In the mid-nineties, Carol got a perm and joined her first and last dating service. The hairdo made her look more like a poodle than a middle aged woman looking for love. Perhaps that is why all the men she dated through that service turned out to be dogs! Love always to Elizabeth and Taylor, who love me no matter what I look like.



**Please remember to silence your cell phone and mobile devices.
No texting during the performance. —Thank you**

Staff Biographies

Elliot Weiner (Director)

Elliot has directed TLT shows including *Sylvia*, *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Eleemosynary*, and *Star-Spangled Girl*. He's had favorite acting roles locally in *Miracle on 34th Street*, *California Suite*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* at TLT; and *Rainmaker*, *My Name is Asher Lev*, and *Tuesdays with Morrie* at Lakewood Playhouse. *Steel Magnolias* is his new favorite.

It was the seventies and I was combing long (side) hair across the top to "cover" the bald spot. It was very hot and I couldn't drive with the car windows down because the wind would break the hair spray seal. I went to an intensive 2-week pottery workshop in the Tennessee mountains, couldn't wear a hat and had to scratch my head with my pinkie – the hair spray seal you know. After a couple hot days of digging clay, building kilns and creating, another potter said, "Why the hell do you do that (comb over)? It looks stupid and you're making yourself miserable." I pulled my side hair into a pony-tail and never combed-over again.

Nena Curley (Assistant Director/Stage Manager)

Nena is happy to be back at Tacoma Little Theatre, where she recently Stage Managed *Miracle on 34th Street*. Other shows include; *Rainmaker* and *Sherlock's Last Case* at the Lakewood Playhouse, and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and *Crazy for You* at The College of Idaho, where she received a BFA in Theatre. It has been a blast laughing through the tears with these six wonderful ladies, Elliot, Madison and Kelty! Thank you all!

In 2002 my grandmother passed away from breast cancer. She had gone through chemo and wore wigs through this period of her life. After her death I've always sought to help find a cure and bring awareness. I spent several years growing my hair out till I was able to donate 10 inches to an organization who specialized in making wigs for breast cancer patients.

Blake R. York (Set Design and Master Carpenter)

Blake has been involved with theatre in the Puget Sound area for the past twelve years. Blake has recently designed *Endgame*, *Sleuth*, *Spelling Bee*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Sylvia*, *Miracle on 34th Street* and *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks* here at Tacoma Little Theatre. He also designed *Twelfth Night*, *Oliver!*, *The Lion In Winter*, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, and *Sherlock Holmes and the Doom of Devilsmoore* at The Lakewood Playhouse, along with others in the greater Tacoma area. He would like to thank Jen, his parents, and his friends for everything they have done and continue to do for him.

Matt Lawrence (Lighting Designer)

Matt is excited to be designing at Tacoma Little Theatre again. A graduate of The Evergreen State College, and currently the Technical Director for the Performing Arts at TESC, Matt is also the resident lighting designer for the Urvasi Orissi dance company, and has designed locally with Harlequin Productions, South Puget Sound Community College, and at Centralia College. He is the production manager and lighting designer for performance artist Scott Turner Schofield, and has designed lights for India's Rudraksha Orissi dance company, and San Francisco's Capacitor Dance Company. Thanks to Chris for asking him back, his son and design assistant Alexandar, for his help and understanding, and to Amanda, for her love and support..

Matt has not had a hair cut in 10 years, believing long locks to be the source of his theatrical power, and because short hair makes him look like a cliché Georgia high school football coach named Bubbah.

Michele Graves (Resident Costume Designer)

Michele has stitched and designed costumes for Tacoma Little Theatre for over 25 years. In recent years she was costume designer for *Eleemosynary*, *Always . . . Patsy Cline*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *Footloose*, *Sylvia*, and *Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks*. This year Michele has accepted the responsibility of Resident Costume Designer and hopes to continue her relationship with TLT as a costume designer as well as a volunteer for many years to come!

Staff Biographies

Katelyn Simpson (Properties Master)

Newly transplanted, Katelyn is a native of Cincinnati, Ohio. She graduated from Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia, with a Bachelors in English, though the faculty believes to this day it was in Theatre. Through the years she has worked on many plays in many functions, though her most notable productions as props master are *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Lucifer*, and *Niada*. This is her first production with TLT.

While this story isn't about my hair per se, it perfectly describes my drive to make other people's dreams a reality by any means possible. Around the age of 7, my little brother, then 5, informed me he wanted to be a rock star. For this, he needed a toy guitar (which he had), and a mohawk. Unaware of the existence of hair products beyond Suave shampoo at the time, I proceeded to put his blonde bowl cut up into a line of little ponytails across his head, and then cut them to a uniformed length. Mother was amused, till she realized the extent of the damage. Let's just say two children had hair cuts that day.

Jeffery Weaver (Hair and Wig Consultant)

Jeffery is happy to continue to be part of the wonderful family here at the Tacoma Little Theatre. His technical credits include full set dressing and props for the holiday classic *Miracle on 34th Street*, costuming for *The Laramie Project* as well as prop master, and for a variety of shows through the Puget Sound Theater circuit. He would like to thank Elliot, Chris, Nena, and of course his number one lady, Ms. Jen his BFF ****Forever a Duet**** and to his husband and family who continue to support him both on and behind the stage. Much love to you all as without your encouragement I could not do what I do.

"I think that the most important thing a woman can have- next to talent, of course- is her bairdresser."
—Joan Crawford

Madison Austin (Assistant Stage Manager)

Madison graduated from Gig Harbor High School where she was heavily involved in the theatre program. She has also acted extensively and worked backstage with Lakewood Playhouse and their various programs. She's thrilled to be a part of this amazing production and hope that you enjoy watching it as much as she has enjoyed helping bring it to life.

Although styling her hair at home is what she usually does, Madison recently donated 13 inches of her hair to charity. If you are able to, please think of doing the same. Somewhere, someone will be thanking you for it.

Kelty Pierce (Sound Board Operator)

Kelty is thrilled to be working backstage at Tacoma Little Theatre for the first time. She stage managed *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* this past winter at Lakewood Playhouse and has managed numerous of their summer youth shows. Besides running around backstage, she loves being on stage, with youth and mainstage credits that include working at Lakewood Playhouse, Tacoma Little Theatre, Harlequin Productions, and Missoula Children's Theatre in Montana. She would like to thank her parents for their dedication to her passion. To the cast, Elliot, Madison, and especially Nena, thank you for a wonderful show.

I was not even a thought in the 1980's, therefore; I don't have an awesome 80's hair horror story full of perming, feathering, and teasing. Though, nearly a year and a half ago, I dip dyed my hair in purple Kool-Aid, after being told, "It will wash out in about two weeks". Well, all this time later, you can still see purple/red pieces of my hair hidden away in the bottom layer. At least I know my hair holds color well!

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210 N. I STREET, TACOMA, WA 98403
WWW.CHANGINGSCENENORTHWEST.ORG

On September 28th we celebrated the opening of our 95th Season with a Gala Event that was filled with a silent auction, entertainment, and a sneak peek of our upcoming productions. If you missed it, we hope that we will see you there next year. The staff and Board of Directors are happy to report that this event helped to raise over \$3000.00 for Tacoma Little Theatre and could not have been achieved without the assistance of the people listed below. Please join us in thanking them for their tireless efforts.

Robert Alan Barnett
Cheryl Brown
pug Bujeaud
Barbara Burt
Aya Clark
Evelyn Conroy
Nena Curley
Emma Deloye
Jordan Duncan
Tracy Engels
Brynne Garman
Kendra Gazdik
Michele Graves
Joe Horn
Frank Kohel

Maria, Doug, Jonah & Emma Konop
Debra Leach
Jeanette & Matthew Mason
Marty McKenzie
Anthony Morley
Pavlina Morris
Sharry O'Hare
Michael Rivers
Alyson Soma
Brandon Taufest
Justine, Mark & Emily Tvedt
Maria Valenzuela
Elliot Weiner
Suzy Willhoft
Blake R. York



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LEDs automatically trigger to light your interior after the sun goes down. This dynamic combination makes it possible to reduce your energy use by up to 94%. In addition, the Smart LED System has earned the prestigious ENERGY STAR rating* for its ability to minimize heat loss in extremely cold climates and heat gain in extremely warm ones, giving you the ultimate in thermal performance.



For more information please contact:

Carrie Cooke
253.752.7000 x48
carrie@graylumber.com

Sarah Ortega
253.752.7000 x47
sarah@graylumber.com

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