



For Immediate Release

October 25– November 12, 2017

Bridge Street Theatre presents

REDWOOD CURTAIN

by Lanford Wilson

with Molly Parker Myers, Julie Pham, and Joseph Tisa

Directed by John Sowle

Designed by John Sowle in collaboration with Harry Matthews

Costumes by Michelle Rogers

Sound by Carmen Borgia

Production Manager: Caedmon Holland

November 2 – 12, 2017

Bridge Street Theatre Mainstage

44 West Bridge Street, Catskill, NY



Julie Pham and Joseph Tisa in Lanford Wilson's "Redwood Curtain"
Photo by John Sowle

Lanford Wilson Weaves a Contemporary Fairy Tale in Bridge Street's "Redwood Curtain"

America has always been haunted by the legacy of its involvement in Vietnam. Returning to the States, veterans often found themselves facing a populace either actively hostile or somehow ashamed, eager to

erase the memory of a war that the U.S. had not 'won'. Feeling misunderstood, unappreciated, and unable to re-assimilate into 'normal' society, an untold number escaped into a ghostly, feral existence in the Redwood Forests of Northern California, an area that reminded them of the jungles they'd left.

Playwright Lanford Wilson was also haunted by a war whose after-effects he'd dealt with so brilliantly in his 1978 play "5th of July". At the dawn of the 1990s, while teaching a five-week workshop at Humboldt State University in Arcata, California, he encountered these homeless vets almost daily when they'd emerge from the woods to panhandle, scrounge through dumpsters for food, and perform odd jobs. From this seed, Wilson conceived a play called "Redwood Curtain" about a 17-year-old Vietnamese-American piano prodigy, adopted in infancy by a wealthy California family, but obsessed with discovering the identity of her biological father, an American GI who abandoned her and her birth mother in Saigon. She tracks one of the homeless vets into the forest where he has retreated, convinced that he can provide a crucial link to her past. And in true fairy-tale tradition, the woods in Wilson's "Redwood Curtain" turn out to be full of magic and, ultimately, healing.

"America's long Vietnam Era hangover is just one of the themes Wilson deals with in this powerful and touching piece," says John Sowle, director of the upcoming production of 'Redwood Curtain' at Catskill's Bridge Street Theatre. "All the characters in the play feel lost and helpless in some way. Lyman Fellers just wants to be left alone, to forget the war and everything else but his own immediate needs. Geri, the adoptee, feels a desperate need to know for certain where, and who, she comes from. And Geri's Aunt Geneva, a timber heiress whose family has responsibly and sustainably logged the trees in the forest for generations, is suddenly faced with losing them in a hostile takeover by corporate interests. Surrounded by these massive, ancient redwoods, deeply and immovably rooted in the earth for centuries and now threatened themselves, all three of these characters feel rootless and adrift. And none of them will be able to find their way 'out of the woods' until they can come to grips with, and face, the legacy of the past. This is a deeply warm and human play and we're particularly honored to be presenting it in the two weeks surrounding Veteran's Day."

Appearing in the Bridge Street Theatre production are NYC actors Julie Pham as Geri and Joseph Tisa as Lyman, with local favorite Molly Parker Myers as Geneva. The production is directed by John Sowle and designed by Sowle in collaboration with Catskill artist Harry Matthews. Costumes are by Michelle Rogers and sound is by Carmen Borgia. The Production Stage Manager is Caedmon Holland.



Julie Pham and Molly Parker Myers. Photo by John Sowle

Easily one of Lanford Wilson's most touching and intimate works, "Redwood Curtain" will be presented Thursdays-Saturdays at 7:30pm and Sundays at 2:00pm, from November 2-12 on the Bridge Street Theatre Mainstage, located at 44 West Bridge Street in the Village of Catskill, NY. The Thursday November 2 preview and the Sunday November 5 matinee are both "Pay-What-You-Will" performances. Advance tickets are

available for \$22 at BrownPaperTickets.com or by calling 800-838-3006. Tickets can also be purchased at the door prior to each performance (on a space available basis) for \$25. Students age 21 and under are always \$10.

Events at Bridge Street Theatre are supported in part by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and by Public Funds from the Greene County Legislature through the Cultural Fund administered in Greene County by the Greene County Council on the Arts.

For more information, visit the theatre online at BridgeSt.org.

Performance Calendar:

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November 2 – 12, 2017

Bridge Street Theatre Mainstage

44 West Bridge Street, Catskill, NY

Thursday November 2 @ 7:30pm ("Pay What You Will" preview)

Friday November 3 @ 7:30pm (Opening Night)

Saturday November 4 @ 7:30pm

Sunday November 5 @ 2:00pm ("Pay What You Will" performance)

Thursday November 9 @ 7:30pm

Friday November 10 @ 7:30pm

Saturday November 11 @ 7:30pm

Sunday November 12 @ 2:00pm (Closing Performance)

Tickets:

Advance tickets available at <http://redwood.brownpapertickets.com> or by calling 800-838-3006

General Admission \$22, \$10 for students age 21 and under

Tickets can also be purchased at the door prior to each performance (on a space available basis) for \$25, \$10 for students age 21 and under.

The Cast:



Julie Pham (*Geri Riordan*)

***JULIE PHAM** (*Geri*) is over-the-moon to be making her debut with Bridge Street Theatre and congratulates REDWOOD CURTAIN's cast, crew, and creative team on their much-deserved success. Originally from Vietnam in a family of actors and singers, Julie swiftly switched careers as a hedge fund analyst in Boston, MA to emerging actress in the Big Apple. Favorite stage credits include: RESISTANCE with Semicolon Theatre, UNDERGROUND at the Metropolitan Playhouse. She also appeared in films and TV shows as Mrs. Huang on TOWER HEIST, Tanya Nelson in BAD FORTUNE, and Jane Doe in PUNCH MONEY. Besides acting, she works fulltime as Director of Operations at BuildingLink.com, runs marathons, strikes silly yoga poses in public, shucks oysters, and makes some mean & lean smoothies! Discover more at www.missjuliepham.com! So much love to Gerald (aka hubby), Mom & family, friends, & coworkers for the support! Namaste.



Joseph Tisa (*Lyman Fellers*)

***JOSEPH TISA** (Lyman) is an actor based in New York City. His recent regional credits include appearances in THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD, AND THEN THERE WERE NONE, and NOISES OFF! at the Lyric Repertory Company in Utah, ALL MY SONS at the Gulfshore Playhouse in Florida, TIGERS BE STILL at The Public Theatre in Lewiston, Maine, OF MICE AND MEN and AS YOU LIKE IT on a national tour with The Acting Company, the world premiere of Bob Clyman's THE EXCEPTIONALS at Merrimack Repertory Theatre, CAPTORS at the Contemporary American Theater Festival, THE FANTASTICKS at Long Wharf Theatre, and productions of STONES IN HIS POCKETS, BEAU JEST, THE DRESSER, THE BIRTHDAY PARTY, and THE RESISTIBLE RISE OF ARTURO UI. Film and TV credits include WEAKNESS, VIRGIN ALEXANDER, and THE KNICK, directed by Steven Soderbergh. Mr. Tisa is a graduate of the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University.



Molly Parker Myers (*Geneva Simonson*)

Molly Parker Myers (*Geneva*) is delighted to return to Bridge Street Theatre, most recently having appeared in last season's *A LIFE IN A DAY: LUCKY LINDY*. Other work with BST/Kaliyuga includes *THE MOUND BUILDERS*, *TRUE LOVE LIES* and *KILL ME NOW*. Recent regional credits include *EMILIE: LA MARQUISE DU CHATELET DEFENDS HER LIFE TONIGHT* and *THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES* (Wellesley Rep), *THE GRADUATE*, *THE NORMAN CONQUESTS TRILOGY*, *LOST IN YONKERS* and *TALLEY'S FOLLY* (Winnepesaukee Playhouse), *YOURS, ANNE* (Half Moon Theatre) and *CONSTELLATIONS* (Tangent Theatre). Many thanks to John and Steven for all you do. www.mollyparkermyers.org

The Production Team:

LANFORD WILSON (*Playwright*) received the 1980 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for *TALLEY'S FOLLY*. He was a founding member of Circle Repertory Company and one of twenty-one resident playwrights for the company. His work at Circle Rep includes: *THE FAMILY CONTINUES* (1972); *THE HOT L BALTIMORE* (1973); *THE MOUND BUILDERS* (1975); *SERENADING LOUIE* (1976); *5TH OF JULY* (1978); *TALLEY'S FOLLY* (1980); *A TALE TOLD* (1981); and *ANGELS FALL* (1982), all directed by Marshall Mason; and the one-act plays *BRONTOSAURUS* (1977) and *THYMUS VULGARIS* (1982). His other plays include: *BALM IN GILEAD* (1965); *THE GINGHAM DOG* (1966); *THE RIMERS OF ELDRITCH* (1967); *LEMON SKY* (1969), and some twenty produced one-acts. He also wrote the libretto for Lee Hoiby's opera of Tennessee Williams' *SUMMER AND SMOKE* and two television plays, *TAXI!* and *THE MIGRANTS* (based on a short story by Tennessee Williams). Other awards include the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, and an Obie for *THE HOT L BALTIMORE*, an Obie for *THE MOUND BUILDERS*, a Drama-Logue Award for *THE FIFTH OF JULY* and *TALLEY'S FOLLY*, the Vernon Rice Award for *THE RIMERS OF ELDRITCH*, and Tony Award nominations for *TALLEY'S FOLLY*, *5TH OF JULY*, and *ANGELS FALL*. Mr. Wilson completed an entirely new translation of Chekhov's *THE THREE SISTERS*, which was commissioned and produced by the Hartford Stage Company. His play *TALLEY AND SON* (the third play in the Talley Trilogy) opened in New York City in September 1985. His play *BURN THIS* opened at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles in January 1987 starring John Malkovich and Joan Allen and opened on Broadway in October 1987 with the same cast. His play *REDWOOD CURTAIN* opened in Seattle in January 1992 and in Philadelphia in March, and at the Old Globe in San Diego, California, in January 1993. It opened at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre on Broadway on March 30, 1993. Wilson died from complications of pneumonia on March 24, 2011.

JOHN SOWLE (*Director and Designer*) is Artistic and Managing Director of Bridge Street Theatre. He founded Kaliyuga Arts in 1986 with his partner Steven Patterson and has received multiple awards for his directing and design work on their Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York productions. Most recently he designed Bridge Street Theatre's production of *THE TAVERN*, and directed and designed their productions of *HOW TO PRAY*, *THE OFFICIAL ADVENTURES OF KIERON AND JADE*, *FRANKENSTEIN: THE MODERN PROMETHEUS*, *HOLIDAY MEMORIES*, *THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH*, *THE KILLING & THE LOVE DEATH* (late plays of William Inge), and *GRINDER'S STAND* by Oakley Hall III. John has an undergraduate degree in mathematics from M.I.T and a PhD in Dramatic Art from UC Berkeley.

HARRY MATTHEWS (*Sculptor*) is an artist, musician, and writer who lives on an old farm outside of Catskill, on the Kaaterskill Creek in Kiskatom, NY. In his sculptural work Harry tends to use mostly objects found in the woods, along local creeks and river banks, and in the often thorny and web-draped recesses of his barely functioning imagination.

CARMEN BORGIA (*Sound Designer*) is a musician and sound designer. He has designed and mixed films for PBS, HBO, IFC and many film festivals. He has also released two CD's of his own work, "North" and "The Red Circle Line". In 2009 his musical, *SOUTH*, premiered at Dixon Place in New York City and had a reading here at Bridge Street Theatre earlier this year. He operates out of studios in Catskill and The Bronx, doing sound-for-picture work and music recording. He can be found at Magpie Bookshop Saturday

afternoons at his Ukulele Camp, where anyone can learn to uke.

CAEDMON HOLLAND (*Production Stage Manager*) is a 25-year old actor from Delmar, NY. He grew up learning theater and at the age of six started attending The New York State Theater Institute's summer theatre program. He continued with this until the age of 14 when, during his high school years, he started focusing more on film. At 19, Caedmon transferred to the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. While there, he was part of the only Western Theater school performance in the world to be invited to participate in the First International Asian Theater Festival in 2010. Caedmon graduated UNM with a BA in Theater in December of 2014. Since then, he's been back home in upstate NY, performing locally with Bridge Street Theatre in LUCKY LINDY and Kaaterskill Actors' Theater in CHRISTMAS IN JULY among others, and building his resume for a move to NYC or LA. He was also Stage Manager for Bridge Street Theatre's productions of THE TAVERN, FRANKENSTEIN, SOUVENIR, THE OFFICIAL ADVENTURES OF KIERON AND JADE, THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARIGOLDS and HOW TO PRAY.

MICHELLE ROGERS (*Costumes*) began costuming plays while in college and continued working on high school productions throughout her teaching career. She's designed costumes for MARAT/SADE, A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT'S DREAM, OLIVER! and PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, among others. Now retired from education, Michelle is delighted to be working with Bridge Street Theatre. She has been the costume designer for THE TAVERN, THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARIGOLDS, and HOW TO PRAY.