

A. R. GURNEY'S

A BENEFIT FOR
QUINTESSENCE
THEATRE

LOVE LETTERS



WITH
DAVID MORSE & SUSAN WHEELER
ONE NIGHT ONLY
VALENTINE'S DAY | 2. 14. 2024

7PM - CHAMPAGNE & HORS D'OEUVRES | 8PM - CURTAIN

IN SUPPORT OF
THE CAMPAIGN FOR QUINTESSENCE AT THE SEDGWICK
7137 GERMANTOWN AVE. PHILADELPHIA PA 19119

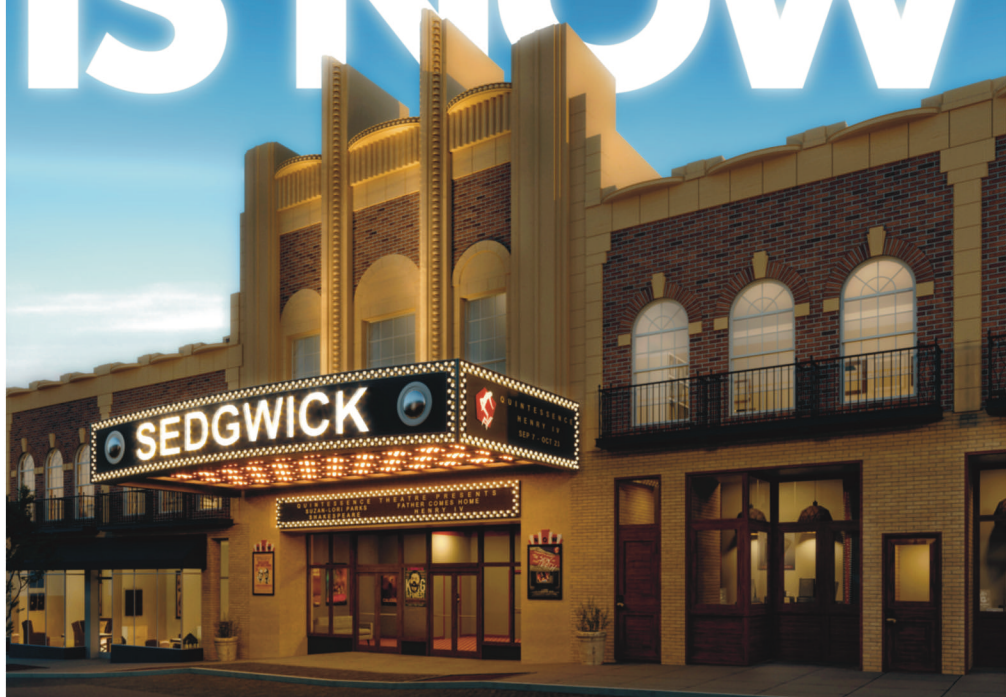
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THE FUTURE OF THE SEDGWICK THEATER IS NOW



**THE SEDGWICK WAS BUILT IN 1928,
AND WILL CELEBRATE ITS 100TH BIRTHDAY IN JUST FIVE YEARS.
WE NEED YOUR HELP TO SECURE ITS LEGACY.**

We invite you to be part of this historic project
as Quintessence Theatre purchases and renovates the iconic Sedgwick Theater
to serve as a performing arts destination and community space
for Northwest Philadelphia and the region.

To learn how you can support us, please be in touch with Victoria Sicks,
Director of Development at Victoria@QTGREP.org



SCAN THE QR CODE
TO VIEW THE FULL CAMPAIGN.



OR VISIT QTGREP.ORG/DONATE

QUINTESSENCE

P R E S E N T S

LOVE LETTERS

BY A.R. GURNEY

WITH DAVID MORSE* & SUSAN WHEELER*

GREG PERNICONE STAGE MANAGER

LOVE LETTERS RUNS 100 MINUTES INCLUDING A 5 MINUTE PAUSE.

LOVE LETTERS WAS PRESENTED AT
THE LONG WHARF THEATRE,
M. EDGAR ROSENBLUM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR;
ARVIN BROWN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
NOVEMBER 4, 1988 - DECEMBER 11, 1988

* MEMBER OF ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION





American playwright A.R. Gurney wrote plays for nearly fifty years, including *Scenes From American Life*, *Children*, *The Dining Room*, *The Middle Ages*, *Richard Cory*, *The Golden Age*, *What I Did Last Summer*, *The Wayside Motor Inn*, *Sweet Sue*, *The Perfect Party*, *Another Antigone*, *The Cocktail Hour*, *Love Letters*, *The Snow Ball* (adapted from his novel), *The Old Boy*, *The Fourth Wall*, *Later Life*, *A Cheever Evening*, *Sylvia*, *Overtime*, *Let's Do It* (A Cole Porter Musical), *Labor Day*, *Far East*, *Darlene and the Guest Lecturer*, and *Ancestral Voices*. Gurney wrote the libretto for *Strawberry Fields* with music by Michael Torke, part of the Central Park Opera trilogy presented by the New York City Opera in the Fall of 1999. His novels include *The Gospel According to Joe*, *Entertaining Strangers*, and *The Snow Ball* and awards include Drama Desk, N.E.A., Rockefeller Foundation, New England Theatre Conference, Lucille Lortel, American Association of Community Theatres, American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Gurney was on the faculty of M.I.T. where he taught literature until 1996. He was a member of the Theatre Hall of Fame and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Gurney passed away June 14, 2017.

BIOS

DAVID MORSE*

David Morse received Emmy nominations for his roles on *House* and HBO's *John Adams*, and has appeared in numerous television shows, including Emmy-nominated *Escape at Dannemora*, *Hack*, *Treme*, *True Detective*, *Outsiders*, and *St. Elsewhere*. Morse's film credits include *The Green Mile* (1999), *Dancer in the Dark* (2000), *16 Blocks* (2006), *The Hurt Locker* (2009), *World War Z* (2013), and *Concussion* (2015). A stage veteran, Morse was most recently seen on Broadway in the 2022 revival of *How I Learned to Drive* and the 2018 revival of *The Iceman Cometh*, for which he received Tony Award nominations. His other notable stage performances include the 1984 Los Angeles production of *Of Mice and Men*; Lanford Wilson's *Redwood Curtain*, in which he originated the role of Lyman; Heather MacDonald's *An Almost Holy Picture*; the Broadway production of *The Seafarer*; the Off-Broadway production of *The Unavoidable Disappearance of Tom Durnin*; and the original Off-Broadway production of *How I Learned to Drive*, for which he won a Lucille Lortel Award, a Drama Desk Award, and an Obie Award. He can also be seen in Apple's *The Last Thing He Told Me*, and *The Morning Show*, Netflix's *The Chair*, HBO's *The Deuce*, and Showtime's *The GoodLord Bird*. Upcoming films are *Cabrini*, *Blood Knot*, and *La Gloria*. He is represented by Gersh, Kipperman Management, and Katz, Golden & Rosenman LLP.

SUSAN WHEELER*

Susan Wheeler trained at William Esper Studio in New York. Theater roles include *Macbeth* (Lady Macbeth), an award-winning LA production of *Of Mice and Men* (Curly's wife) and *Did Someone Yell Fire?* TV includes George C. Scott's daughter in *Mr. President*, Candice Bergen's stepmother on *Murphy Brown*, *LA Law*, *Deadly Intentions*, and *The Twilight Zone*. Films include *Miracles*; *Personal Foul*. These days she writes as Susan Morse, stepping back onstage briefly when David adapted her bestselling memoir (*The Habit*) into a play called *Susan Reads The Habit*. She is now working on a book about duplicate bridge while playing all over the country. Her articles can be seen in the ACBL Bridge Bulletin. Thanks to my Valentine of 43 years - the gift of working with you again is the best one ever. ❤️

DAVE POSMONTIER | RECEPTION MUSIC

Dave Posmontier has been playing piano since the age of 7 and professionally for the past 50 years. He majored in mathematics at Temple University but played with the Temple Jazz Band and knew he would be a full-time musician after graduation. A pianist, organist, composer, arranger and teacher, he has performed and recorded with many jazz artists including Christian McBride, James Moody, Chris Potter, Grover Washington Jr. and Johnny Hartman. Dave has 2 recent CDs to his name as well as a vinyl LP of his original compositions recorded back in the day in 1984. He has also been playing traditional and innovative klezmer music with a band called, "Klingon Klezmer." They have performed in a number of major concert halls throughout Germany and have released two CDs. In celebration of its 100th birthday in 2007, the renowned Settlement Music School honored 100 alumni who have made a difference in the world of music. Dave and his brother Rich were chosen to receive this honor. More info on Dave can be found at www.daveposmontier.com

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

Actors' Equity Association ("Equity"), founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 51,000 professional Actors and Stage Managers. Equity fosters the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. Equity is governed by its own members through an elected Council, representing principal actors, chorus actors and stage managers living in three regions: Eastern, Central and Western. Members at large participate in Equity's governance through a system of regional Boards and Committees. Equity has 28 designated liaison areas, metropolitan areas with a concentration of more than 100 members. Download Equity's Constitution and By-Laws.

FROM ALEX BURNS

I grew up on Devon Street, just across from the Mt. Airy train station. Possibly the most perfect place in the world for a child to grow up in the 1980s. I even took “roller dance” classes just across the street at Motion Studios on Saturday mornings, now Fit Life Gym. At that time the façade of the Sedgwick Theater was bricked up, and its towers disappeared into the other epic art deco facades sprinkling the 7100 block of Germantown Avenue. A young Alex never guessed that the vaulting halls of a 1920s art deco movie palace was hidden behind, nor that it would become the center of his life’s work, a Horcrux if you will. It was in the early 90s that David and Betty Ann Fellner began their journey of reopening the historic venue. Then, as a teenager, I remember a jazz concert in the unheated central lobby, followed by a reception in the Fellner’s apartment, watching as David and Betty Ann slowly removed the bricks, reopened the building and proclaimed their dream of a world class cinema and community arts center for northwest Philadelphia.

Do you remember when in 1995 the Arden Theatre moved from St. Stephens to its home in Old City, or when the Wilma Theater moved from the Adrienne to Broad Street in 1996? And then Ed Rendell’s greatest coup, the opening of the Kimmel Center in 2001? Each was a leap of faith. Each transformed the city and its soul. A great city requires great art. Great art making requires great spaces. Quintessence at the Sedgwick is that next leap.

While so many of Philadelphia's theatres have been demolished (we lost two of the last greats, the Boyd and the Royale, in the last decade) the bones of the Sedgwick remain largely intact. For over fifteen years the Fellners warded off possible demolition, laid the groundwork, and established the possibility for the rebirth of the Sedgwick. Then, in 2010, Quintessence arrived. How was it possible that a city renowned for its arts and its history lacked a regional theatre dedicated specifically to the classics? And in the magical and palatial halls of the dilapidated Sedgwick Theater, was there a better space for the heightened language, and epic tales of the classics? The Fellners decided to take a leap of faith and invest in Quintessence. Could all our dreams become a reality, transforming a neighborhood main street, preserving an historic building and establishing a nationally renowned classical theatre? As people had laughed at the dreams of the Fellners, people laughed at Quintessence. And yet, here we are. In our 14th season, an award-winning professional Equity theatre, on the cusp of acquiring the Sedgwick Theater, and renovating the resplendent halls designed by William Harold Lee in 1927, so that they can shine and be the home for the finest actors in the American theatre, performing in the greatest plays ever written, for the next one hundred years.

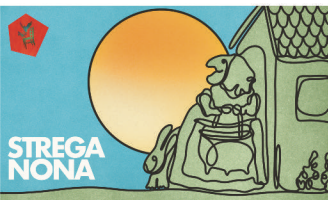
For a theatre like Quintessence to survive and thrive it takes the investment of the entire community. I am so grateful to David and Susan Morse for not only believing in Quintessence and its work, but for publicly endorsing us and joining us in this herculean fundraising effort.

In an age where empathy, communication and nuance are more important than ever, the classic theatre is a bulwark for humanism, erudition, and language. Its continuance is not guaranteed and must be fought for. There is much money and resources that must be secured in order to make all of this possible: for Quintessence, for the Sedgwick and for Philadelphia. On a day of love and romance, I choose to be wildly joyous and optimistic. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for joining us on this journey. And since you're now our Valentine, please let me know how we can make all of our dreams come true.

-ALEX BURNS



QUINTESSENCE CAMP



QUINTESSENCE CAMP is part of our mission to develop the next generation of classical theatre lovers. Using theatre games and exploratory exercises to develop an original adaptation of a classical piece of literature, each week ends with a performance. Our focus on the collaborative process allows participants to build confidence, develop character, and experience the theatrical process first-hand.

PHOENIX & TURTLE GROUNDINGS: **STREGA NONA**
AGES 7-11 | TUITION \$350 | 9AM - 4PM // JULY 8 - 12 2024

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AGES 12-17 | TUITION \$700 | 9AM - 4PM // JULY 15 - 26 2024

PHOENIX & TURTLE WORKSHOP: **MUSICAL THEATRE TECHNIQUE**
AGES 12-17 | TUITION \$350 | 9AM - 4PM // JULY 29 - AUGUST 2 2024

DISCOUNTS:

EARLY-BIRD DISCOUNT: 10% off for signing up before March 1.

SIBLING DISCOUNT: 25% off for multiple children from the same household.

LOCALS DISCOUNT: 10% off if you're a mt. airy resident.

ALL CAMPER'S MUST SHOW PROOF OF COVID VACCINATION.

\$100 OF TUITION IS NON - REFUNDABLE.

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WITHDRAWALS AFTER JULY 1 ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR A REFUND.

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