

Thank you for your support of Remy Bumpo. We hope you enjoy our newsletter! If you would like to receive this newsletter via e-mail and save us the cost of postage, please e-mail fcoffeen@remybumpo.org. Thanks again!
-Fraser Coffeen, Audience & Donor Services Manager



Remy Bumpo Newsletter - think Theatre

Greetings!

Winter is coming soon and here at Remy Bumpo we are preparing for the busy holiday season. In this issue we take a look at our two upcoming holiday productions - Philip Barry's classic comedy *The Philadelphia Story* and the imaginative one man show *Dickens in America*. Both are a great way to spend the holidays with Remy Bumpo!

If you have not already done so, be sure to buy tickets for *On the Verge* today. This exciting fourth production in our 07/08 mainstage season will run from May 15 - June 1, 2008. Don't forget, subscribers can buy tickets at a special \$25 discounted rate - but act fast, the \$25 ticket offer expires on November 15! After the 15th, tickets will be available at the regular \$35-\$40 price. Buy your \$25 tickets today. Call the box office at 773- 871-3000 and be sure to mention you are a Remy Bumpo subscriber.

We hope to see you soon!

Dickens in America



On December 16, 17, and 18, for 3 shows only, Remy Bumpo presents the Chicago premiere of *Dickens in America*. We are honored to bring this powerful one man show to Chicago and look forward to sharing it with you. [Tickets for Dickens in America are on sale now, and can be purchased by calling 773-871-3000.](#)

SPECIAL EVENT: On Monday, December 17 at 7:00 pm join us for a performance of *Dickens in America* followed by a reception with playwright James DeVita and actor James Ridge as they discuss the play over food and drinks. This special event takes place at the theater. Tickets are \$40 for this performance only.

Remy Bumpo subscriber Herbert Channick recently wrote an article on Dickens's journeys through America, which was published in *Illinois Heritage* magazine. The following is excerpted from that article.

In September of 1841, twenty-nine year old Charles Dickens, the English-speaking world's most celebrated living novelist, decided to act on a long-held desire to cross the ocean to America. The youthful Dickens regarded himself as a political reformer and radical, an enemy of conditions in his native England which had produced slums, poverty, child labor and a host of other social ills, and in the young republic across the sea he hoped and expected to find a model for dealing with these problems. Possessed of a lively and inquiring

mind he also was plain curious and last, but far from least, he expected to make a good deal of money. Despite repeated denials before and during his trip, Dickens from the first planned to publish a book recounting his adventures in the New World. His American Notes for General Circulation would be published less than four months after he reached home.

The trip started well, once a stormy January crossing of the Atlantic was behind him. Dickens loved Boston and Boston loved him. "The city is a beautiful one," he wrote, "and cannot fail to impress all strangers very favourably." He visited a hospital, a prison, an institution for the blind, a factory in nearby Lowell and found them all to be superior to their English counterparts. To his close friend and future biographer John Forster he wrote, enthusiastically, if not very accurately: "There is no man in this town, or in this State of New England, who has not a blazing fire and a meat dinner every day of his life."

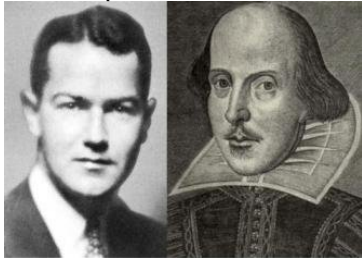
He was surrounded by crowds of admirers, feted at balls and at public and private dinners and reveled in the companionship of a coterie of Boston intellectuals: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, future abolitionist Senator Charles Sumner, Richard Henry Dana, Jr., author of *Two Years before the Mast*, and Harvard professor Cornelius Felton. Ever afterwards he would refer to Boston as "My American home."

But when he left the Hub City on February 5th, his honeymoon with America and Americans was about to end...

Visit www.charlesdickenspage.com to read the complete article, including details on Dickens's disappointing trip, as well as his return trip to America 25 years later, which forms the basis of Dickens in America.

Thanks to Herbert Channick for permission to reprint this article.

Thinkpiece: The Barry/Shakespeare Connection



In *Quoting Shakespeare: Form and Culture in Early Modern Drama*, author Douglas Bruster examines a link between Philip Barry's *The Philadelphia Story* and the works of Shakespeare. Director Shawn Douglass offers the following excerpt.

Throughout *The Philadelphia Story* Barry and the dramatis personae make coy references to Shakespeare, mimic his dramatic language (or at least a version of it), and play on figures connected with the Renaissance literary scene and its heritage. Barry's choice of name for Tracy Lord's fiancé - George Kittredge - comes as playful homage to his Shakespeare professor at Harvard, George Lyman Kittredge. And "Uncle Willie," the inebriated pincher who wanders through the play offering comic relief, recalls Shakespeare himself.

George Whicher's hope that the "life blood" of Shakespeare was running in the veins of American writers appears to have formed part of the background of *The Philadelphia Story*. While the plot of Barry's play and film revolves around the doings of a wealthy and pedigreed Philadelphia family, both vehicles imply that a rising middle class is taking strength from Renaissance words.

Characters in *The Philadelphia Story* play with the dramatic language of the Renaissance, and more often than not, their allusions are general rather than specific. That is, what they say only sounds like Shakespeare: the point, however, lies not in any accuracy of quotation but in their ability to approximate, mimic, and parody. Perhaps the point is to not get it

right. When Sandy tells Tracy "Get thee to bed," when Tracy, intoxicated, says "Not wounded, sire - but dead," and when Mike, also intoxicated, declaims "No lightweight is balding, beetle-browed Sidney Kidd, no mean displacement, his: for windy bias, bicarbonate," they are, like Huckleberry Finn's King and Duke, having a good time with hard and archaic words but also making a space for their "new" American Shakespeare. One could, of course, take Mike's declamation as a parody of certain Shakespearean lines (e.g., Mercutio's "Here are the beetle brows shall blush for me" [Romeo and Juliet, Act I, scene IV], and Polonius's "With windlass and with assays of bias" [Hamlet, Act 2, scene I]). But in the end it is the general unnaturalness of Shakespearean diction - the fact that we recognize it is (and isn't) Shakespeare - that makes things funny. Barry has his characters engage in the American Glib; that Barry himself relies on this glibness testifies to the thoroughly "literary" nature of the group identity his characters forge.

Announcing Looks Like Chicago

Remy Bumpo has been invited to take part in a terrific new program - Looks Like Chicago!

Looks Like Chicago is a unique collaboration between 4 of Chicago's most exciting theatre companies - Remy Bumpo, Congo Square, Silk Road, and Teatro Vista. The aim of Looks Like Chicago is not to attract more white audiences to "ethnic" theatres, or to attract audiences of color to traditionally "white" institutions. Rather, Looks Like Chicago celebrates the entire spectrum of theatre in Chicago, and strives not only to bring new audiences to each of the participating theatres, but also to create an ongoing dialogue about the nature of diversity on Chicago's stages.

Subscriptions to Looks Like Chicago include one voucher for each participating theater and are available for just \$98. As a Remy Bumpo subscriber, you can also purchase a 3 play package, which includes tickets to Silk Road, Teatro Vista, and Congo Square, for only \$75. Looks Like Chicago subscriptions are on sale now, and can be purchased by calling 312-554-9810.

We are proud to take part in Looks Like Chicago, and hope you will enjoy the program!

Between the Lines November 21 and December 1

Join us as we present the next performances in our 2007/08 Between the Lines series. Come learn more about The Philadelphia Story at one of these fascinating events.

On, Wednesday, November 21 at 6:30 pm, Remy Bumpo resident dramaturg Peter Davis will present background on Philip Barry and the production of this classic show. Peter will also be appearing onstage as a cast member in The Philadelphia Story, so will have insight on the show from a number of different levels. The pre-show talk will be followed by a 7:30 performance, as well as a post show talkback.

On Saturday, December 1 at 1:30 pm we welcome Northwestern University professor and cultural historian Lane Fenrich, who will look at high society during the time of the play. Those who attended the Salon know Lane is a compelling and dynamic speaker, and we are pleased he is joining us once again. This event will be followed by a 2:30 performance and a post show talkback.

Each event includes refreshments along with a copy of our informative study guide, which

details the history of the play while providing supplementary materials to help contextualize each work.

Tickets for this event are \$10 (not including the performance) and are available by calling the box office at 773-871-3000. Don't forget, as a subscriber you can always exchange your regular performance for the Between the Lines shows.

Get the most out of your Remy Bumpo experience - come join us and see what is Between the Lines!

The 2007/08 Between the Lines series is sponsored by Don Stevens.

Brain Buster



Q: In 1919 while attending Yale, The Philadelphia Story playwright Philip Barry won a competition for new one act plays. What was the title of his winning play?

Mail or call in your answer by December 1 for a chance to win a bottle of champagne signed by the cast of The Philadelphia Story. One winner will be selected from the correct answers and will be announced in the next newsletter.

Congratulations to Michael Mudjer for his correct answer to our last trivia question. What 3 writers said: "Who would write, who had anything better to do," "Convictions are more dangerous foes of truth than lies," and "The truth is rarely pure and never simple?" The answers: Lord Byron, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Oscar Wilde respectively. Michael is the winner of a copy of Fiction signed by the cast.

Heroes play reading December 9

On Sunday, December 9, Remy Bumpo presents the second production in our 2007/08 play reading series.



HEROES
By Gerald Sibleyras
Translated by Tom Stoppard
Sunday, December 9
6:30 pm
Victory Gardens Greenhouse Theater
FREE

Heroes tells the story of three retired World War I veterans who pass their days in a military hospital discussing long-forgotten battles and grumbling about the staff - until the day they plan their daring escape. The play is the winner of the 2006 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. Tom Stoppard on his translation: "There are no one-liners. It's much more a truthful comedy than a play of dazzling wit. It's a kind of exquisite pain. You feel rather mean at laughing at these characters because, for them, there is nothing amusing about their plight. Nothing much changes for these men. It's another day and they're still there, still turning over the same hopes and fears." Heroes will feature Artistic Associate David Darlow and two more actors yet to be announced.

The Remy Bumppo play reading series is a chance to see possible future Remy Bumppo productions before they reach the main stage. This is a unique chance to see these shows early, discuss your thoughts with the company, and help us shape our season. Light refreshments will also be served.

Heroes is a free event for our subscribers and donors. Reservations are required, and can be made by calling 773-244-8119. The deadline to RSVP is Thursday, Dec. 6.

Special offer for subscribers - extend this invitation to your friends! Bring friends who are not currently subscribers, and those friends get in for free as well. There is no limit to how many guests you can bring. This is another great way to help introduce your friends to Remy Bumppo.

Are you interested in helping support Remy Bumppo as a sponsor of this reading? If so, please contact Kristin Larsen at 773-244-8119 for more information.

Join us for brunch!

The countdown to Remy Bumppo's annual benefit has begun. This year, the benefit will be held on Friday, May 9, 2008. In celebration, Remy Bumppo is throwing a Six Month Kick-Off Party, and we want you to join us for brunch. Come and share your ideas for our annual fundraiser as we look for energetic volunteers and fabulous auction item ideas.

The brunch will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, November 17 at our rehearsal space at 3717 N. Ravenswood Ave. #245.

Enjoy food and drink as we put our heads together to support Remy Bumppo's think theatre by making this year's benefit the most successful event yet. RSVP for the Kick-Off Party by November 14 to Amanda at 773-244-8119.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Welcome our newest board members

Please join us in welcoming two new members to the Remy Bumppo family - Brent Beardsley and Laura Perlow, both of whom recently joined our Board of Directors.

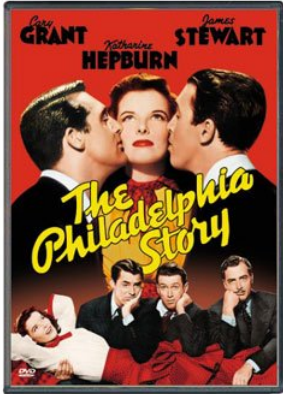
Brent is a member of the Financial Services, Consumer Goods, and Operations practices with Boston Consulting Group, Inc. His work has focused primarily on growth strategies, operational effectiveness, and organizational design. He has covered many innovation topics in his casework, including deep customer discovery, idea generation, prioritization, and product management. Brent holds a master's degree in business administration from the University of Michigan, a master's of science in mechanical engineering from Northwestern University and a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Texas A&M University.

Laura is the Foundation Relations Manager at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. She has an MFA in Theatre Management from the Yale School of Drama, a BFA in Stage Management from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and has worked in various capacities in theatre for most of her life. She also currently serves as Treasurer for the Avon Center School PTO, and interviews prospective students as a volunteer for the Yale University Alumni Schools

Committee.

We are so pleased to have both of them on board, and know you will enjoy meeting them at one of our upcoming events!

Remy Recommends



Recommended Reading and Viewing:

With our production of *The Philadelphia Story* coming soon, now is a good time to reexamine the two famous film versions of the play. 1940's Academy Award winning *The Philadelphia Story*, starring Cary Grant, Katherine Hepburn, and James Stewart, is a classic romantic comedy. This excellent movie is an interesting counterpoint to the play, as they share a number of similarities, but also have distinct differences. Also worth a look is the musical version of the play - 1956's *High Society*, starring Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly, and Frank Sinatra.

To get ready for Dickens in America, read Charles Dickens's own account of his first American expedition - *American Notes for*

General Circulation.

Finally, for a light read, Nick Sandys suggests *The Uncommon Reader*, Alan Bennett's "delightful" new novella about Queen Elizabeth II, and Philip Roth's *Exit Ghost*, which strikes an interesting comparison to *Fiction*.

Around Town:

Gregory Anderson can currently be seen in *A Moment Alone* at IO Theatre. *A Moment Alone* runs on Tuesday nights through November 13.

Nick Sandys recently worked on fight choreography for the Lyric Opera's production of *Giulio Cesare* which runs through December 1. Nick describes the show as "A very theatrical, all singing and dancing and fighting production. Highly Recommended!". Nick also strongly recommends checking out *Merchant On Venice* at Silk Road Theatre Project, one of our partner theaters in Looks Like Chicago.

Remy Bumppo
think theatre
email: fcoffeen@remybumpo.org
phone: 773-244-8119
web: <http://www.remybumpo.org>