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"an evangelical rock musical"

by Paul Ledoux and David Young

January 6 - February 1

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The Congregation

Cale Blackwell	TED DYKSTRA
Herchel Blackwell	RON LEA
J.D. Blackwell, Shelly Grant, James	PETER MILLARD
Molly King	JANET LAND
Truman King, Dave	JOHN WRIGHT

Cale Blackwell & the Razorbacks

TED DYKSTRA	Piano
PAUL HESSEY	Drums
PETER MILLARD	Guitar
PAT PEREZ	Saxophone/ Synthesizer
JOHN WRIGHT	Guitar

directed by BRIAN RICHMOND
musical director DAVID SMYTHE
designed by GUIDO TONDINO
lighting by ALEXANDER GAZALE
sound by HOWARD L. VAN SCHAICK
stage manager JEAN-FRANÇOIS COUPAL
assistant stage manager JOHN RAYMOND

Setting: Razorback, Arkansas

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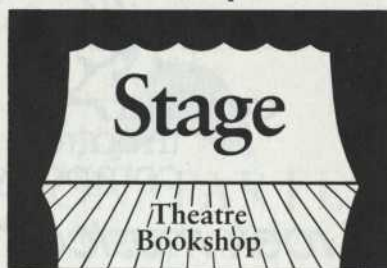
Fire was originally commissioned and premiered by Magnus Theatre (Thunder Bay) in April, 1985.

There will be one 20-minute intermission, time enough to enjoy a drink, coffee, sandwiches or cake at our bar.

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THE SONGS

Side A

- SWING LOW SWEET CHARIOT*
(traditional)
SWING DOWN CHARIOT
(traditional)
DON'T BE CRUEL
(O. Blackwell/E. Presley)
MILKSHAKE MADEMOISELLE
(J. Hammer)
WHOLE LOT OF SHAKIN' GOING ON
(D. Williams/S. David)
I SAW THE LIGHT
(H. Williams)
GOOD GOLLY MISS MOLLY
(B. Blackwell/J. Marscalco)
MY BLUE HEAVEN*
(Donaldson/Whiting)

Side B

- HEARTBREAK HOTEL*
(E. Presley/T. Durden/M. Axton)
THE ANGELS REJOICED
IN HEAVEN LAST NIGHT
(C. and I. Louvin)
I THINK I NEED TO PRAY*
(B. Taylor/D. Mahr,
C. Harrelson/J. Lewis)
GREAT BALLS OF FIRE
(O. Blackwell/J. Hammer)
FALLIN' THROUGH THE BOTTOM
(C. Holland/S. Lenard)

Songs performed by arrangement with Performing Rights Organization of Canada Limited and Composers, Authors and Publishers Association of Canada Limited.

*Original arrangement by David Smythe

Note from the Authors

Rock and Roll and Fundamentalist Religion would seem to be, in every sense, antithetical, but they may also be seen as two sides of the same coin.

FIRE grew out of our fascination with the unique relationship between Pentecostal Christianity, as it is practiced in the American South, and the early stars of rock and roll. They stole the religious fire found in their churches and turned it into a secular phenomenon that shook the world we live in.

The roots of rock and roll run deep into Southern gospel music, both black and white. The music in FIRE is drawn from traditional gospel music and the repertory of three rock superstars, Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Little Richard.

Elvis' vocal style is based on the singing of his hero Jimmy Blackwood, leader of the great white gospel group The Blackwood Brothers. Jerry Lee Lewis studied for the Ministry and first performed, in church, alongside his cousin The Rev. Jimmy Swaggard. Little Richard began his career in a choir.

Both Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis grew up worshipping in the Pentecostal The Assembly of God Church, where speaking in tongues and moving in the Spirit were an important part of worship. The intensity of this form of religious experience formed the performance styles of both singers, and many others who would follow. It was this wild style of performance that bridged the gap between white and black music and created rock and roll.

Yet even as these early stars burst upon the music scene they found themselves in conflict with their deeply felt religious beliefs. All three have recorded albums of sacred material. Right up until the time of his death, Elvis expressed a personal preference for gospel music. Jerry Lee to this day claims he is damned for playing the devil's music and often expresses a desire to go back to preaching. Most dramatic of all has been the religious conversion of Little Richard, who at the height of his career threw all his jewelry into the Mississippi River and became a preacher and gospel singer.

The conflict between religious belief and the power of rock and roll continues to be a driving force in the lives of many performers, just as the conflict between our desire for a higher spiritual existence and the immediacy of our temporal lives continues to be a driving one in the history of mankind.

Paul Ledoux & David Young

le ST. ALEXIS

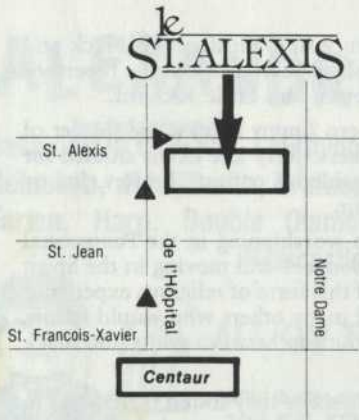
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The Gazette

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PAUL LEDOUX (author), grew up in Halifax, N.S. He began his theatrical career in 1976 when his first play, "The Electrical Man", won the Quebec Drama Festival Award. Since that time he has had twenty-two plays produced across the country. In 1979, he co-founded Stages, Eastern Canada's first cabaret theatre where he produced ten new Canadian musicals, including his own one-woman biography of Judy Garland, "Judy", which has been produced across Canada and in the U.S.. Other recent productions include "The Children of the Night" at Factory Theatre in Toronto and Touchstone in Vancouver; "Sin" at the Waterfront Theatre, Vancouver; "The Clockmaker" for Mermaid Theatre, Nova Scotia; the Centaur/Magnus Theatre National Tour of *LOVE IS STRANGE*. Recent Ledoux plays include "As Time Goes By" for Magnus Theatre and "Differences" for Theatre On The Move. In addition to his work as a playwright, Paul has directed and designed extensively for the stage and has been active in play development with most of the major programs in the country. He is currently playwright-in-residence at Factory Theatre in Toronto and Chairman of the Playwrights' Union of Canada. Other writing credits include journalism, radio drama and television. Recent productions include radio adaptations of "Love is Strange" and "Honky Tonk Angels", as well as episodes for the television series "The Edison Twins".

DAVID YOUNG (author), has worked in various mediums as a writer. He has published two experimental novels ("Agent Provocateur", "Incognito"), written children's television ("Fraggle Rock"), screenplays for two feature films and two stage plays co-authored with Paul Ledoux including *LOVE IS STRANGE* seen at Centaur in 1985. David has been fiction editor at the Coach House Press since 1972. He currently lives and works in Toronto with his wife, writer Sarah Sheard and their baby Benn. Forthcoming projects include a new novel manuscript and a screenplay for film director Dan Petrie.

* * *

TED DYKSTRA (Cale Blackwell), since graduating from the National Theatre School in 1984, has appeared in "Midsummer Night's Dream" for Toronto Free Theatre; "Criminals in Love" and "Souvenirs" for Factory Theatre (Toronto); "Nero and Seneca" and "Ghetto" for Toronto Workshop Productions; "Beaux Stratagèmes" and "Antigone" for the Stratford Festival Young Company; "Poison, Passion and Petrification", "Banana Ridge" and "Black Coffee" for the Shaw Festival; and most recently, in "Breaking the Silence", a Shaw Festival Toronto project. His TV and film credits include "Seeing Things", "Home Free", and "For the Record" (CBC); "Amber Waves" (ABC); "The Boy in Blue" (20th Century Fox) and "The Littlest Hobo" (CTV). An avid composer/singer, Ted's music credits include an original sound score for "Holiday" at the Shaw Festival; musical direction for "Ghetto" at Toronto Workshop Productions and work as part of a songwriting team called Waterworks. Currently, he is writing the music for a rock-opera entitled "Promo Transformed", based on the Prometheus legend.

PAUL HESSEY (Drums), originally from London, Ontario, studied in Guelph and now lives in Thunder Bay. His musical career includes work with Southern Ontario bands from polka to punk, and recent recordings with several Canadian singers. Having performed extensively in and around Thunder Bay, Paul worked on his first stage production last season, also with Brian Richmond and David Smythe, on Magnus Theatre's "As Time Goes By" by Paul Ledoux and David Young.

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JANET LAND (Molly), created the role of Molly for the original production of *FIRE* at Magnus Theatre last season. Other musical stage credits include the roles of Sister Mary Amnesia in the highly successful Toronto production of "Nonsense", Louisa in "The Fantastiks" at the Leah Polsun's Theatre and Belle in "Scrooge" for Theatre New Brunswick. Equally at home in dramatic theatre, Janet's numerous roles include Jan in "I'll Be Back Before Midnight" again for TNB, the Woman in Solar Stage's production of "American Century", and the original Tiffany in "Cakewalk" for the Blyth Festival where she also created the role of Anna in "A Spider in the House". On television, Janet has appeared in the award-winning "Charlie Grant's War".

RON LEA (Herchel Blackwell), was recently seen in Centaur Theatre Company's *THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE* and played Agathon in Centaur's special production of Plato's *SYMPOSIUM* last season. A National Theatre School graduate and native Montrealer, he recently directed "Laundry and Bourbon" and "Lonestar" for APA at McGill Players' Theatre. Stage credits include the title role in APA's production of "Pericles", Bobby in APA's "American Buffalo", and Raoul in Elite Productions' "Extremities" seen at Centaur last year. Film credits include "Punch Drunk" for CBC's "The Way We Are" series, "Wild Thing", "The Trumpeter", and "Mortimer and Stalinsky". Ron will repeat the role of Pericles when APA appears at the Citadel in Edmonton this April.

PETER MILLARD (J.D. Blackwell), was last seen at Centaur as Siegfried Sassoon in Stephen Macdonald's *NOT ABOUT HEROES* almost three years ago. Since then, he has played Bottom in Toronto Free Theatre's "Midsummer Night's Dream" in High Park, Charlie in Toronto Workshop Production's circus play "Hey Rube!", Peter in Theatre New Brunswick's "A Taste of Honey" and the Colonel (again for TWP) in "The Last Hero". The interim has also taken him to the Tarragon Theatre ("A Moon for the Misbegotten"), Solar Stage ("Showman", "The Maltese Bluesay", and "Amelia Earhart Was Not A Spy" by Montreal's Colleen Curran), Young People's Theatre ("Servant of Two Masters"), Gryphon Theatre ("Back Before Midnight"), and Edmonton's Citadel Theatre ("Fool For Love"). Most recently, he played Staff Sergeant Froggy le Seur in "The Foreigner" at Toronto's Royal Alexandra Theatre. Television work includes last season's mini-series "Kane and Abel", the television movie "Counterplay", episodes of "Night Heat" and "The Edison Twins", and currently, a ten-episode series for TV Ontario.

PAT PEREZ (Saxophone), attended the Crane School of Music in Potsdam, New York and Humber College in Toronto. He has recorded an album of original music for CBC and has spent the last few years performing on radio, television and film between club engagements in and around his home base, Toronto.

JOHN WRIGHT (Truman King), was last seen at Centaur nearly ten years ago in the tour production of the smash hit, *CRUEL TEARS*. His stage career has taken him to theatres across Canada and he has appeared twice at the Edinburgh Festival. Recent roles include James Leeds in "Children of a Lesser God" at Neptune Theatre in Halifax, Prospero in "The Tempest" for Nightcap Productions, and Roma in "Glengarry Glen Ross" and the Old Man in "Fool For Love" at Saskatoon's Actors Lab where he is Associate Director. John performs on numerous CBC radio dramas and recently in principal roles for CBC-TV's "Distant Battles" and "Tiger Moth". Film credits include "Walls" for Jericho Films, Vancouver.

* * *

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BRIAN RICHMOND (director), is directing his fourth show at Centaur and his eighth in Montreal. His previous shows at Centaur include *CRUEL TEARS*, *LOVE IS STRANGE*, and *GONE THE BURNING SUN*. He has also directed "Birth Rite" and "Moonshot" for the Phoenix Theatre and "Bosoms and Neglect" and "Billy the Kid" for the Saidye Bronfman Centre. He was the founding Artistic Director of Persephone Theatre in Saskatoon, dramaturge for Playwrights' Workshop Montreal, and for the last four seasons, has served as Artistic Director for Magnus Theatre in Thunder Bay. Born and raised in Vancouver, Brian studied English and Philosophy at Simon Fraser University and Theatre in Paris. He particularly enjoys working on new plays and in the past ten years has had the opportunity to premiere a number of new works by many of Canada's leading playwrights. *FIRE* is his sixty-ninth professional production and occurs in his fortieth year.

DAVID SMYTHE (musical director), was musical director for the first production of *FIRE* at Magnus Theatre (1985). In 1986, he co-wrote and directed the music for "As Time Goes By" at Magnus Theatre (also by Paul Ledoux and David Young). As a guitarist, David played in the Toronto blues band Whiskey Howl in the 1970s. He has worked in the orchestra pit behind such artists as Englebert Humperdink, Rich Little, Dinah Christie and Bob Hope; and has collaborated with Paul Shaffer on several projects including the 1975 Toronto production of "Godspell" at the Playhouse Theatre.

GUIDO TONDINO (designer), has produced designs for over seventy-five plays which have been seen at the Shaw Festival, Manitoba Theatre Centre, Neptune Theatre in Halifax, Toronto's Tarragon Theatre and others. He is currently the resident designer for Theatre Calgary where he has just opened "The Play's The Thing" and "The Normal Heart". Centaur audiences will remember his designs for last season's *THE ZEN OF AN INTELLIGENT MACHINE* and from previous seasons: *SALT-WATER MOON*, *NOT ABOUT HEROES*, *MOVING* and *BLOOD RELATIONS*, to name a few. He has also designed in the U.S. both off-Broadway and regionally at the Denver Center Theatre and at the Hartman Theatre. This past summer, he designed "L'Assassin" for the Théâtre du Bois de Coulonge. He is a graduate of the National Theatre School and has taught design at Parsons in New York, Bishop's University, l'Option Théâtre, Ste. Thérèse. Guido is a member of United Scenic Artists, local 829.

ALEXANDER GAZALE (lighting designer), has been involved in theatre since his high school days at Loyola. While attending John Abbot College he worked with many of Montreal's amateur and semi-professional companies: Thé-Arts, Phoenix Theatre, Group of Four and others. He spent a summer at La Poudrière. He joined Centaur's staff as Technician in Centaur 1 and was Head Technician in Centaur 2 for several seasons before taking on his present position as Technical Director. As Centaur's Resident Lighting Designer, his credits include *K2*, *MOVING*, *GONE THE BURNING SUN*, and last season's *ALBERTINE*, *IN FIVE TIMES*, *GONE WITH HARDY*, and *GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS*. He will recreate his design for *FIRE* at the Citadel and the National Arts Centre as well as design lights for Centaur's upcoming *SOMEBODY SOMEBODY'S RETURNING*.

HOWARD L. VAN SCHAIK (sound), is a graduate of the University of Regina, currently in his fourth season as Head Technician in Centaur 2. Howard

did the sound mix for HAPPY END and LOVE IS STRANGE and has designed sound for BLOOD RELATIONS, SWEET LIKE SUGA, NOT ABOUT HEROES and GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS for Centaur. Audiences will remember his lighting designs for 'NIGHT, MOTHER and last season's THE ZEN OF AN INTELLIGENT MACHINE and MASTER CLASS. Later this season, he will design lighting for THE FAITH HEALER. Additional credits include Festival Lennoxville, The National Arts Centre-Atelier, Kawartha Summer Theatre and The Piggery.

JEAN-FRANÇOIS COUPAL (stage manager), began his Stage Management apprenticeship at Kawartha Theatre in Lindsay, Ontario, completing the training at Centaur two seasons ago. He worked on SALT-WATER MOON, MASTER HAROLD... AND THE BOYS and 'NIGHT, MOTHER. Last season, as Assistant Stage Manager, he worked on ALBERTINE, IN FIVE TIMES, PRAGUE, MASTER CLASS and GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS. He recently stage managed THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE and will work on THE REAL THING and BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS later this season.

JOHN RAYMOND (assistant stage manager), is in his second season at Centaur, having worked on THE ZEN OF AN INTELLIGENT MACHINE and GONE WITH HARDY. He resides in Montreal and has directed several productions for local amateur groups including "Songs of War" for Children's Creations, "Oklahoma" and "Oliver" for Beth Zion Youth, and "Fiddler on the Roof" for Beth Tikvah Youth. He recently stage managed the Canadian première of "Social Security" at Stage West Dinner Theatre in Mississauga, Ontario, and has also worked at the Kawartha Summer Theatre in Lindsay, Ontario.

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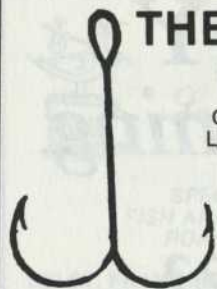
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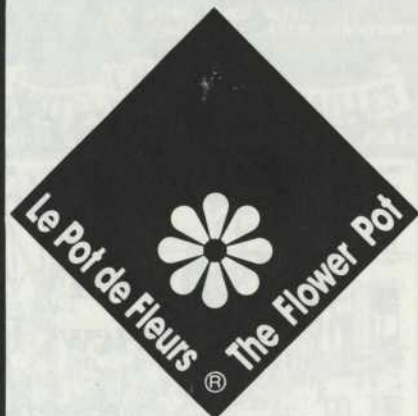


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A Midsummer –
Night's Dream

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Centaur Theatre Company is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and engages professional Artists, who are members of Canadian Actors' Equity Association, under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement. Centaur Theatre Company performs under the auspices of the Centaur Foundation for the Performing Arts.

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