

Wednesday, Nov 04, 2015

Working in the Arts: Alumni News

Among our most accomplished alumni is **Esau Pritchett**, who is spending the fall at the Cleveland Play House playing the lead role of John Proctor in Arthur Miller's modern classic *The Crucible*. The Play House, which is celebrating its 100th anniversary, was the recipient of the 2015 Regional Theatre Tony Award.

In her review of the *The Crucible* in the Cleveland Plain Dealer, Andrea Simakis gave Esau a review that any actor would cherish. She wrote, "Esau Pritchett as Proctor . . . is a marvel and the molten core of . . . *Crucible*. He is so very right for the role . . . it would be hard to sit through another production without him. (Sorry, Daniel Day Lewis – you were a mighty fine Proctor, but Pritchett might just be finer.)" And there is more! We really recommend you take the time to read the whole review, which you can do [here](#).



Esau Pritchett in *The Crucible*. Photo by Roger Mastroianni, courtesy of Cleveland Play House.

Alexa Moffo, who is living in Chicago, was happy to announce that she has booked a network television show. Unfortunately, she is sworn to secrecy and that's all we can tell you for now, but when we know more, we give you all the details.

Our double MaTilDa-winning music alumna **Cáitlín Burke** is in the ensemble and understudying the role of Mother Abbess in the lavish new production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound Of Music*. It played at the Ahmanson Theatre in LA until the end of October and Cáitlín did have an opportunity to go on as an understudy. This month the show began its nationwide tour. It will be in Lansing in February and in Detroit in May. You can get tickets [here](#).

Here are a few more casting notes. **Danielle DeWulf**, who is in New York, announced she would be playing the role of Sasha in Ethan Levy's film *October Pain*.

Devin Price, who is also in New York, announced that he got a phone call asking him to join the cast of *On Kentucky Avenue*, a celebration of Atlantic City's famed Club Harlem. Devin sometimes posts about the grind of going to auditions, but he says it pays to be, "positive, patient and persistent."

Jacléne Wilk has been cast in an ad for Rent the Runway, a company based in NYC that has designer/runway gowns and dresses which are available for women all over the US to rent. "It is really awesome!" Jacléne said. "These super expensive dresses can be some regular girl's dream dress for the day without the expensive price tag. I was cast and shot it two days after I auditioned. I am looking forward to seeing it!" So are we Jacléne!



Caitlin Burke in *The Sound of Music*.

Theatre alumna **Lauren Knox** will be part of The Purple Rose Theatre Company's 25th Anniversary season and she will play a major "role." Lauren will direct *The Odd Couple*, the much loved classic comedy by Neil Simon, which will run from January 21 until March 26, 2016. This is a story almost everyone knows: two old friends suddenly find themselves incompatible roommates. You can read

Rounding out our theatre alumni who have been in the news is **Gina Smothers**, whose work with Amarant Design Collective and theatre professor **Jeremy Barnett** at the the Howell Opera House was featured in the PBS show *Detroit Performs*. You can see a from that show [here](#).

Voice alumna **Ann Toomey**, who is working on her MM in voice performance at the University of Cincinnati College - Conservatory of Music, has won a spot in the Ryan Opera Center at the Chicago Lyric Opera, a very elite program, which only accepted two people this year. "I am ecstatic and still in disbelief that I have been selected to be a part of the Ryan Opera Center's ensemble for the 2016-2017 season," Ann said. "Thank you to everyone for all your love and support. It means the world to me."

Nicolette Book also studies voice at the University of Cincinnati College - Conservatory of Music. This fall she will play the lead role of Hanna in CCM's production of *The Merry Widow*. The comedic operetta will run from November 19 until the 22 in the Patricia Corbett Theater. If you are in the Cincinnati area, tickets are available [here](#).



Ann Toomey, second from right, second row from the botto