

# The State of LILA

November 23, 2007

Andy

Dearest friends,

As the holiday season is upon us and we're feelin' fat on some delicious Thanksgiving meals, we feel it is in this spirit to GIVE THANKS for an incredible year for Theatre LILA.

We set out this year with the task of foundation building – the metaphor we used to speak of the year 2006-7 was INCUBATION – taking the time to get the inner workings of LILA fluid and strong, to strengthen our ties outward in creating residencies, and to build a base for the company that is rock solid and sustainable.

We are proud to announce that the INCUBATION phase is over and we are ready to BUST out into an exciting 2008!

And as we shed old skin for new, we are turning up the volume of our fundraising efforts this year. With your help we are looking to expand our LILA residencies to reach out to even more communities around America, and gain more exposure nationally and internationally by submitting LILA productions to festivals and regional theatres in 2008.

We need your support now more than ever! Our goal – \$50,000 in 2008! And it's easy to donate. Just go to our website [theatrelila.com](http://theatrelila.com) and click on the "donate" button and you'll be part of **Theatre LILA's TAKE FLIGHT Campaign!**

But let's not get ahead of ourselves...

First things first! ...a **CELEBRATION of good things past...**

And as much as we would like to say this with brevity, our cup runneth over ...**There is much to say!**

**ENJOY THE NEWS!!**



Jessica

First and foremost, I am pleased and proud to announce our 501(C)(3) status! We are now officially a **NON-PROFIT organization** as per the United States Internal Revenue Service! No longer must we funnel donations through our artistic sponsorship at The Field in order for your money to be tax-deductible. **Your tax-free dollars can now go straight to THEATRE LILA, INC. - no middleman!**

We also launched our brand new **WEBSITE**, thanks to our indomitable and brilliant designer, Jason Lanius.

Check it out if you haven't had the opportunity. If we do say so ourselves... **it looks HOT!**

[theatre.lila.com](http://theatre.lila.com)



This was the year of **RESIDENCIES...**  
Oh, what a year,  
What an extraordinary year!!

## **THESMOPHORIA CELEBRATES WISCONSIN'S RURAL WOMEN**



Last November, Artistic Director, Jessica Lanius, traveled to Sauk Prairie, Wisconsin where she held a Theatre LILA residency with a multi-generational cast of community women at the River Arts Center. Lanius was invited to write and create THESMOPHORIA an original play celebrating the stories of triumph, joy, hardship, and determination of Wisconsin and Sauk Prairie's own rural women.

This River Arts residency was a true community project where a cast of 14 actors and dancers developed original roles in a 5-week intense rehearsal process which included collaborating, improvising, and experimenting with the physical theatrical techniques originated by the LILA Company. This work was commissioned by River Arts Inc. as part of their Rural Women: Voice & Spirit exhibit presented by artists Kelly Parks Snider and Jane Bartell. THESMOPHORIA was made possible by a grant from Sauk County Arts, Humanities and Historical Preservation Committee.

*"I wanted to thank you for Thesmophoria. As I sat there with my friend, I was so impressed & touched by the insight with which you put the play together. I can't help thinking that many women who have had these experiences now feel "heard," understood, and like they are part of a larger community of incredible women.... what a gift....thank you for bringing that to us and for allowing us to be a part of its creation."*

**Michelle Hazard** - Contributing Wisconsin Poet

## THEATRE LILA STORMS CAPE COD WITH **THE LEAR PROJECT**

In August, Theatre LILA's Artistic Directors Andy Arden Reese and Jessica Lanus, and founding company member Susan Schuld traveled to Cape Cod, Massachusetts for THE LEAR PROJECT. In collaboration with the Harwich Junior Theatre and directed by Andy Arden Reese, THE LEAR Project assembled a multi-generational cast of women to dissect, dissemble, and dissolve expectations of women in power in Arden Reese's adaptation of Shakespeare's King Lear. Exploding the tragic story of monarch Lear, who's crumbling body mirrors the crumbling of an empire, this production placed women in the roles conventionally played by men and smashed the rules of the mother/daughter, sister/sister, friend/friend relationship and the roles women play when confronted with the temptation of ultimate power.

*"A Magical Mystery Tour De Force... these girls kick ass."*

**John Watters** - The Cape Chronicle

*"Good theater often provides one of two reactions: it entertains, or it prompts thought. Rare is the production that does both. With The Lear Project, Harwich Winter Theater and Theatre LILA have created that most rare of alchemies."*

**Scott Dalton** - The Cape Codder



In conjunction with The LEAR Project process, Theatre LILA led a performance workshop for a multi-generational group of women to develop the theatrical landscape of the LEAR world. For three weeks, this group of women and girls delved into the physical theater techniques of LILA's 360 degree fusion and all of the ensemble work seen in The LEAR Project was developed by the ensemble through our "theatrical research" explored within the workshop.

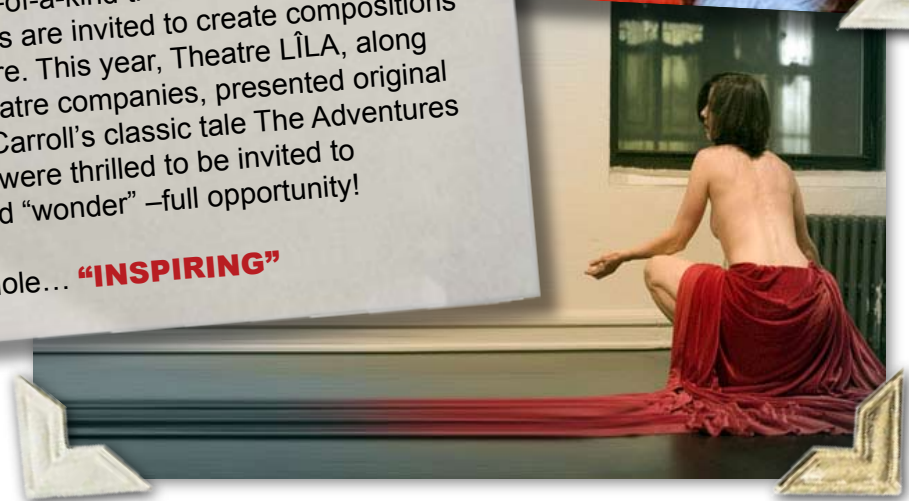
The LEAR Project went on to be represented in the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod's regional Creative Collaborative conference in November, which drew artists and cultural organizations from across Cape Cod to celebrate the year's best collaborative projects in the arts.

**What an amazing project this was for us!**

## **ALICE WANDERS at THE DRAGON'S EGG**

Through special invitation, THEATRE LILA company members Andy Arden Reese, Jessica Lanius, and Travis Stroessenreuther traveled to Mystic, CT in June to perform in "Alice Wanders..." the 2007 incarnation of The Dragon's Egg Theatre and Dance Center's Narrative Assemblage Project. Hosted by Marya Ursin and her company, the Mystic Paper Beasts, the Narrative Assemblage Project is a one-of-a-kind theater festival where theater and dance companies are invited to create compositions inspired by a work of literature. This year, Theatre LILA, along with 6 other professional theatre companies, presented original pieces based on the Lewis Carroll's classic tale The Adventures of Alice In Wonderland. We were thrilled to be invited to participate in this unique and "wonder" –full opportunity!

The word down the rabbit hole... **"INSPIRING"**



## **THE LITTLE PRINCE IS MAGICAL**

In May, Artistic Director Andy Arden Reese directed an original adaptation of The Little Prince as part of a yearlong artistic residency with the Somerset County Performing Arts High School. Through an exploration of theatrical composition and the question "What is LOVE?," the acting students of the Gifted and Talented Program created a unique expression of this timeless tale as it relates to the year 2007 when there is so much unbridled hate in the world. In the words of the Little Prince, "It is a matter of greatest consequence of all..."

**"Theater magic!"**

Somerset County Teen Arts Festival, 2007



Whew! And that's only our **RESIDENCIES!**

This year we also developed the **LILA WILDFLOWER** branch of our company

## LILA WILDFLOWER WORKSHOPS BLOOM!

### > Project Girl

*All the World's A Stage: UNLEASH YOUR GIRL POWER*

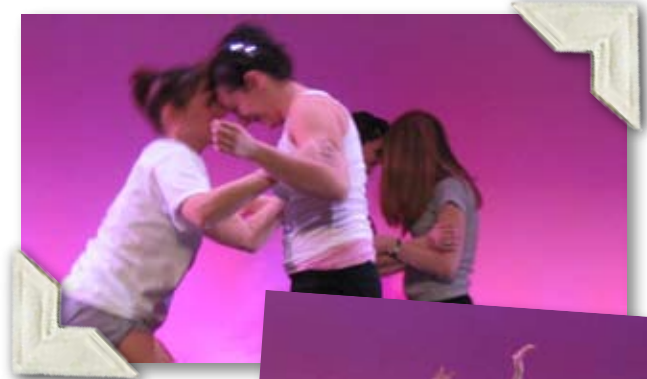
Theatre LILA's Wildflower Project partnered with PROJECT GIRL in Madison, WI in February '07 to celebrate the artistry of a group of girls who had been working together over the course of a year exploring themes such as identity, body image, and self-love through the medium of visual art. In this LILA workshop, these girls had the opportunity to unleash their unique voice on the stage, exulting their authentic spirits and embracing what makes them unique, powerful and an inspiration to each other and the world.



### > Somerset County, NJ

*Inspirational Women: MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS*

The LILA Wildflower Project brought together mothers & daughters from Somerset County, NJ in April, '07 for a pilot project as an extension of Inspirational Women workshops: Inspirational Women: MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS. In this LILA workshop, mothers and daughters delved into the theatrical playing space to explore the unique dynamic of the mother/daughter relationship. Through this spontaneous theater experimentation, we culminated the workshop into a juxtaposition of images, relationship, and text and created moving theatrical collages that deeply explore the question of what it means to be engaged in this universal and profound relationship.



*"I appreciated the opportunity to explore my relationship with my daughter in a new way. It's a wonderful program. Very interesting and moving."*

**Margot Chalek** - a mother

We are excited and honored to be in collaboration with these communities and look forward to the continued expansion of the WILDFLOWER workshops and projects. We are truly committed to developing these programs as they are integral to our LIFE BLOOD.



...Could there possibly be more? ...Is there possibly any more time in day??

But of course... there is our **NYC LAB...**

### **THE NYC LAB EXPLODES!** (well... not really...)

In 2006-07, we continued to run exploratory labs in NYC and had a spectacular retreat at our home-away-from-home in Mystic, CT at The Dragon's Egg. With both company members and guest artists, we continue to explore and experiment with our 360° fusion, testing our own skill level and challenging ourselves to go further and deeper than we think we can go.

We look forward to this coming year to continue to take our work up-a-notch!



AND NOW... drum roll, please... **THE BIG NEWS...**

...Looking forward into 2008...

**THEATRE LILA** COMES HOME to **NEW YORK CITY**

## The BECKETT THEATRE

**March & April 2008**

We are thrilled to be embarking on our biggest endeavor to date! Look for Theatre LILA at the Beckett Theatre (Theatre ROW), NYC for a five-week production run from March 20th to April 19th 2008! Artistic Directors, Jessica Lanius and Andy Arden Reese will direct two new works that will run in rotating repertory.

Auditions for these pieces will begin the week of January 7, Rehearsals will start the last week of January.

Watch for AUDITION and SHOW ANNOUNCEMENTS COMING SOON to an in-box near you!

...AND, we will be hosting a **LILA BASH** in February to get us revved and ramped up for the launch of these 2 exciting new projects!

We're looking forward to seeing you there!

So... there you have it...

**The STATE of LILA**  
...how lucky we are to be in this state!

With our very best wishes to you and yours this holiday season...

**Cheers!**

**Andy & Jessica**  
Artistic Directors  
Theatre LILA