

The Eccentricities of a Nightingale

by Tennessee Williams



Directed by Ed Starr
A Rude Mechanicals Production

The Cast

Alma Winemiller	Adele Robey
Reverend Winemiller	Louis Pangaro
Mrs. Winemiller	Pamela Feldman
John Buchanan.....	Deryl Davis
Mrs. Buchanan.....	Nancy Blum
Vernon and Traveling Salesman.....	Eli Omega
Rosemary	Jennifer Berry
Mrs. Bassett.....	Joyce Wright
Roger.....	Michael McCarthy

The Crew

Director	Ed Starr
Assistant Director.....	Sy DuBow
Technical Director/Designer.....	Eric Honour
Lights and Sound.....	Alex Lemmon
Costumes	Sandy Eggleston
Stage Manager	Ghislaine Dwarka

Director's Notes

"I have only one major theme for all of my work, which is the destructive impact of society on the sensitive nonconformist individual." Tennessee Williams

The play is set in Glorious Hill, Mississippi, shortly before the First World War. Our "nightingale" is Alma Winemiller. Her parents are the dour, unsuccessful minister of the local Episcopal Church, and his crazy wife. For a very long time, she has been in love with her neighbor, John Buchanan. As a nightingale Alma is "a small, unseen bird singing its heart out in the darkness..." The nightingale's song touches something deeply mortal—and immortal—in all of us. Williams once said "I am Alma." The *Eccentricities of a Nightingale*, first appeared as a short story (*The Yellow Bird*), then became a short-lived Broadway play as *Summer and Smoke* (26 performances) in 1948. Williams completely revised and rewrote it and offered it "as a better play" to the London producers of *Summer and Smoke*; his offer was rejected. *Eccentricities* premiered on Broadway in 1976 for another brief run. It was then produced and filmed by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It is still rarely produced.

Williams' plays have been seen by scholars and critics as "allegories of good and evil," "illusion versus reality," "Freud versus Jung," "spirit versus flesh," "fire versus ice," and "exercises in gender distinctions." My view is simpler. As described by Clive Barnes, "The play is a straightforward conflict of two people--one hot and one cold, a woman at base nervously confident, and a man at base confidently nervous." These two characters, the warm-hearted ugly duckling and the gentle, reserved mother's boy are complex and credible enough to satisfy the most jaded among us. Think the Gentleman Caller meets Blanche Dubois. We had an exciting and

rewarding time creating this production. I hope you get as much from it we have had.

Cast and Crew Bios (In Alphabetical Order)

Nancy Blum (Mrs. Buchanan) last appeared as Thelma in 'Night Mother with Rockville Little Theater. Other recent performances include Miss Prism in The Importance of Being Earnest at the Maryland Ensemble Theatre, Susan in The Goddess Diaries at the 2013 Capitol Fringe Festival, Mrs. Savage in The Curious Savage at the Jewish Theatre Workshop of Baltimore, The Nurse in Assisted Living at SSS, and Birdie in The Little Foxes at RLT. She has a Master's Degree in Theatre Performance. Nancy is on the Board of Directors of Rockville Little Theatre and is a member of SAG-AFTRA.

Sy DuBow (Assistant Director) has previously acted in community theater at the Silver Spring Stage and Adventure Theater and has been a regular performer in the Adat Shalom Purimspiels. Sy thanks his wife Estelle for her support.

Pamela Feldman (Grace Winemiller) This is Pam's first venture into the DC area, mostly performing in Baltimore with Spotlighters, Fells Point Corner Theatre and Vagabonds. She is very excited about this show and even though the drive from Baltimore has been taxing, buying stock in Shell has made it all worthwhile!

Alex Lemmon (Lights and Sound) is a senior at Saint Anselm's Abbey school. He comes from a French-American background and in addition to speaking fluent French he inherited his parents' appreciation of food and cooking, sometimes bordering on gluttony. He has traveled extensively throughout the world, having lived in Armenia for three years and spending summers at his family's farmhouse in Normandie, France. After spending this summer traveling in Europe with friends, he will be attending Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester. There, he will pursue a degree in Mechanical Engineering and Astronautics, while pursuing interests in Robotics and International Relations and working for WPI's professional tech crew organization, Lens and Lights.

Michael F. McCarthy (Roger) is delighted to be included in the cast of Tennessee Williams' Eccentricities of a Nightingale (Roger). He made his acting debut several years ago in a production of Pericles, Prince of Tyre (The Pander), which was a role he later reprised for the Capital Fringe Festival. He also has appeared in Lysistrata (Magistrate), and is presently cast in the Rude Mechanical's upcoming presentation of Macbeth (Duncan). Most recently, while living in the UK, Michael acted at Jesus College Cambridge, first in Chekhov's one-actor play, On the Harmful Effects of Smoking (Nyukhin), and later performed selected excerpts from Shakespeare's Richard II (John of Gaunt). He is a teacher and administrator at Saint Anselm's Abbey School here in our Nation's Capital and received theatrical training at The Shakespeare Theater under the tutelage of such wonderful actors as Floyd King, Andrew Long, and Adrian LaTourelle.

Louis Pangaro (Reverend Winemiller) Roles with: Rude Mechanicals: Benedick (Much Ado); Quotidian TC: Captain Lewis (Iceman Cometh), Mr. Brown (The Dead), Dorn (Seagull); Cedar Lane: Macbeth, Antony, Hamlet, Lear, Shylock, Othello, Oedipus, Vanya, Cromwell, Eddie Carbone, Orgon, the Misanthrope, Miser, Alchemist; Talley's Folly.; Capital City Players: Cassius. Chevy Chase Players:

Willy Loman; Shakespeare in the Parque: Oberon/Theseus. Elsewhere: Claudius, Duke Vincent, Iago, Platonov, Jack Worthing.

Adele Robey (Alma Winemiller) A longtime Capitol Hill, and now Anacostia, resident, Adele is a founding member of Theater Alliance, and co-founder of both the H Street Playhouse and the Anacostia Playhouse. All of this has meant she has worked on-stage, off-stage and backstage for many years. Most recently she appeared at the Theatre Lab in August: Osage County in the role of Violet, and in the The Gin Game, under the direction of Rob Lutfy, at the Anacostia Playhouse. She studied at Studio Theatre Conservatory and completed the Theatre Lab Honors Conservatory program. Adele is a full-time freelance graphic artist and a full time theater owner/operator, which adds up to two full time jobs.

Ed Starr (Director) This is Ed's first project with The Rude Mechanicals and he is especially grateful to them for giving him the chance to direct this production. For more than a decade he has been searching for a company to produce "The Eccentricities of a Nightingale;" patience, passion, and perseverance are all virtues! To all the members of this company of actors, designers, and crew he offers his sincerest appreciation and affection. Ed dedicates this production to Isabelle on her eighth birthday.

Joyce Wright (Mrs. Bassett) has worked with a wide range of actors, from Children's Theater to a couple of her most recent projects which include Mattie in "God's Favorite", a re-enactment at the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery and as a GOP Senator in Kevin Spacey's season 3 "House Of Cards. Some of her favorite roles include Mrs. Muller in Doubt, Vera Charles in Mame as well as The Highway Men and Defying Gravity along with Mrs. Wise in "The DC Black Theater Festival". Thanks to my family for your support as I move into my destiny YEA!

Thanks to Our Donors!

Platinum

Covert Beach
Joseph Condo
Jaki Demarest
Doug Humphrey
Ed Starr

Gold

Joshua Engel
Flying Feet Enterprises
Ginny and Bill Jones
J. Calvin Smith

Rachel Zirkin

Silver

Tom and Connie Berg
Wayne DeCesar
Aaron and Irene Engel
Gordon Hagen
Stepher Harris
Robert and Susan Henry
Stephanie Zirkin

Bronze

Nell Codner

Walter J. Dombroski
Scott Farquhar
Steven Mayfield
Liz McDaniel
Liana Olear
Robert Perkins
Anita and Richard Stoll
Michelle Trout

Coming Soon: Macbeth



Performances at the Capital Fringe Festival, July 2014
and at the Greenbelt Arts Center, August 15-23