

NO STRINGS THEATRE COMPANY
presents

Quilters

By Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek
Music and Lyrics by Barbara Damashek
Based on *The Quilters: Women and Domestic Art*
by Patricia Cooper and Norma Bradley Allen



Director ~ *Jim Eckman*
Music Director ~ *Ruth Ann Hanlin*
Lighting & Scenic Designer ~ *Peter Herman*
Costumes & Properties Designer ~ *Lana Eckman*
Choreographer ~ *Kenneth D. Holley*
Stage Manager ~ *Mark Hammersmith*
Producer ~ *Ceil Herman*

Produced by special arrangement with theDramatists Play Service Inc.

Black Box Theatre
430 N. Downtown Mall
575-523-1223

Cast

Margaret
Dana
Sarah
Male Roles
Jane
Lisa
Jenny
Jody

Terri Conatore
Jessica Hernandez
Caryl Weber Kotulak
Wil Moore
Chandra Payne
Marsha Short
Megan Walker
Connie Welch

Musicians

Keyboard
Guitar

Karen Warren
Tom Warren

Production Team

Light & Sound Board Operator

Mark Hammersmith
Danny Wade
Lana Eckman
Meredith Loring
Debby Seavey
Karen Stith
and the entire cast

Costume Construction

Acacia Vesely
Toni Marie
Kathi-Jane

Crew
Publicity
House Manager Coordinator

Director's Note

I've worked in Community Theater all over the USA during the past thirty years. I've acted, been involved in all aspects of the technical side of theater and in 1977 I began my true love in theater, directing. I've directed many productions over the years but this one is very special. I was introduced to *Quilters* when I did lighting for a production at The Bay City Players in Bay City, MI. I fell in love with the story of the homesteading pioneer women and the beautiful songs that helped describe their everyday lives. Most of us today have no idea of the hardships they endured as they worked alongside their husbands to make a life for themselves and their families. I hope you will enjoy this story and the music as much as we (cast and crew) have enjoyed producing it for you.

I want to thank my lovely wife, Lana, for all her hard work. I couldn't have done this without her. A special thanks to our Musical Director Ruth Ann Hanlin, Ken Holley, our Choreographer and, of course, the Warrens for their skilled accompaniment. I thank Peter and Ceil for the opportunity and this wonderful venue to do this show and, of course, my fine, dedicated cast and crew for all their hard work and long hours.

Biographies

Terri Conatore (Margaret) has recently graduated and relocated from Houston, Texas, she works in a physical therapy capacity with children with developmental delays and teens with special needs. Her last stints on stage were the Houston Christmas Revels Chorus and several roles in summer theatre productions at the University of Southern Colorado. She is delighted and pleased to be here doing this again. The joys of her life are her husband Dennis and her three fur children (cats); Piper, Lily, and Ginny. She thanks Jim for giving her this opportunity and thanks her fellow cast members for their support, camaraderie and feedback.

Lana Eckman (Costumes and Properties Design) has been sewing and costuming plays in several community theaters around the US for over thirty years. She thoroughly enjoys theater, except acting. She will paint the stage, sew the costumes, do box office or even clean the floors, but she is a terrible actress. Naturally, her husband would enjoy directing. It's actually a great fit - she does all of the small details he can't seem to get done. Every time they move, the local community theater is a wonderful way to meet people and make friends. Their theater experiences in Las Cruces have been wonderful. They have enjoyed the Black Box since its conception. Doing costumes for this play was a labor of love.

Jim Eckman (Director) has been involved in all aspects of community theater for over forty years. He was "hooked" on theater when he designed the lighting and sound for a high school production of *Our Town* in Indiana in 1962. He loves the tech side of theater, lights, set design and construction, sound, etc. Being seriously handicapped for the past 14 years has drastically limited his ability to participate in that side of theatrical productions. He has been directing productions for thirty years and has done every thing from old fashioned melodramas to Neil Simon. He and his wife have been living in Las Cruces for almost twelve years. He directed a few one act plays at LCCT and most recently directed *Under the Sycamore Tree* at the Black Box.

Mark Hammersmith (Stage Manager) came to Las Cruces nine years ago through Chicago where he got his first taste of theatre after service in the United States Navy. Currently a database applications developer at New Mexico State University, he has once again found a place in the local theatre scene working the booth for *Song at Twilight*, *Under the Sycamore Tree*, *Big Love*, *Always Patsy Cline* and *Baby with the Bathwater* for No Strings Theatre Company at the Black Box and stage managing *The Sunshine Boys* and *Hello Dolly* at LCCT.

Ruth Ann Hanlin (Music Director) received her BM degree from Oberlin Conservatory of Music in 1962, majoring in Violin Performance and Vocal Conducting. She has given many violin concerts and played in symphony orchestras wherever she has lived. She also has conducted singing groups of all types in many cities, and has been Minister of Music in several churches over the years. She founded the 44-voice Westside Community Chorale in 2002 when she was living in Rio Rancho, New Mexico. Currently she is the director of the jazz singing group, *The Close Encounters*, associated with the Mesilla Valley Chorale, and is also the assistant conductor of the chorale. It has been her pleasure to work with the singers in the play, *Quilters*.

Biographies (continued)

Ceil Herman (Producer) is Artistic Director of NSTC where she directed *Seascape*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, 3 of Robert Patrick's Cheep Theatrics, *A Kind of Alaska*, *The Lonesome West*, *Invisible Friends*, *Collected Stories*, *Gray*, *Broadway Bound*, *Here*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *Epic Proportions*, *Proof*, *Circumference of a Squirrel*, *Three Viewings*, *Cinderella Waltz*, *QED*, *Doc Holiday and the Angel of Mercy*, *Belle of Amherst*, *Wonder of the World*, *Underneath the Lintel*, *Nickel and Dimed*, *Aunt Raini*, *Mystery of the Rose Bouquet*, *The Little Girl Who Lives Down the Lane*, *Woman Before a Glass*, *Big Love*, *Vincent*, *Baby with the Bathwater*, *Brilliant Traces*, *What I Did Last Summer* and *6 Dance Lessons in 6 Weeks*. She has been Producer for all NSTC plays since the opening of the Black Box Theatre. She directed several plays at LCCT's One Act Play Festivals as well as *Private Eyes* and the award-winning *Jake's Women*. She has also directed for ACT, Sin Fronteras, and OCTS.

Peter Herman (Scenic & Lighting Design) is the Technical Director and Resident Designer for NSTC. He has had over 75 realized designs for NSTC and other companies. Some of his favorite NSTC set and lighting designs include *Angel Street*, *A Kind of Alaska/The Lesson*, *Proof*, and *Circumference of a Squirrel*. As a guest designer he has worked for ASTC, Creede (CO) Repertory Theatre, LCCT, lo-fi, OCTS, ACT, DAFT and Oñate High School.

Jessica Hernandez (Dana) is currently working as a file clerk in a doctor's office. She performed all through high school with the MHS Theatre Troup. Her last production was *Vacancy in Paradise* as the nurse. She would like to thank her friends and family and she would especially like to thank her boyfriend Seve. He made her remember she could do anything if she tried.

Kenneth D. Holley (Choreographer) is a student at NMSU. He is majoring in Dance as well as Mechanical Engineering Technology. He studies dance with Debra Knapp and was suggested to look into this opportunity for his background in dance and theater as a performer here in Las Cruces and also his high school participation. He has come to NMSU for his high school in Albuquerque where he participated in many play performances and many other arts oriented activities.

Caryl Weber Kotulak (Sarah) was born some seven decades ago in Omaha, NE. She has a B.S. in Education from the University of Nebraska and has taught Montessori Elementary and High School. She came to Las Cruces as a "snowflake" in 2000 and was so enamored that she moved here permanently in 2005. She is mother of 3 sons and a daughter and grandmother to 2. Las Cruces has seen her in Black Box productions of *The Cemetery Club* and *Steel Magnolias*, as well as *And Then There Were None* and *Hello Dolly* at LCCT. She is on the board of the Dona Ana Arts Council.

NEXT AT NSTC

Enchanted April

by Matthew Barber

from the novel by Elizabeth von Arnim

directed by Nikka Ziemer

Performances April 17 - May 3, 2009

"Enchanted April is as good as they come: a lush, thoroughly refreshing theatrical holiday. Escape has seldom seemed so sweet. A magical triumph." LA Times.

Biographies (continued)

Megan Walker (Jenny) is the oldest of 8 children and has lived most of her life here in Las Cruces. She graduated with honors from NMSU with a degree in Fine Arts. She has performed in several local productions over the years, including *A Golden Age: Remembering Radio*, LCCT's *Man of La Mancha* and *Ravenscroft*, and NSTC's *Angel Street*. She currently works at the NM Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum as Exhibits Designer. Her part performing in the recent Ghost Tours at the museum as a Shalam Colonist Francis Newbrough Howland got her noticed by director Jim Eckman who told her about auditions for this play. She would like to thank her family for all their support.

Connie Welch (Jody) first appeared on stage at 6 holding a big yellow sunflower as her skirt accidentally fell down to the ground. She survived that mishap to go on to later perform in the chorus of *Pirates of Penzance* in high school. Over the past 13 years, she has performed in several dinner theatre plays. She was the housekeeper in *Man of La Mancha*. She learned about the technical side of theatre while doing lights and sound for *The Golden Days of Radio* at Cattleman's Dinner Theatre. She has also been in a play at the Gallery Café, two plays at BBT, *Prelude to a Kiss*, and *Nickel and Dimed*. She is happy to be performing here again. She loves to write, play drums, and dance.

Danny Wade (Light & Sound Board Operator) is a medical transcriptionist from Knoxville via Pittsburgh. He is a member of Soulverse, a spoken word/poetry group in Las Cruces, and has worked at the Black Box Theatre as Light Board Operator for *Baby With The Bathwater*, *The Complete History of Las Cruces (Abridged)*, *What I Did Last Summer*, *Delicious Nut*, *Copenhagen*, and as a house manager.

Authors' Acknowledgement

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