

RODNEY'S WIFE press release

MIDNIGHT Presents RODNEY'S WIFE, Opening July 7

The Midnight Company will present the St. Louis premiere of RODNEY'S WIFE by Richard Nelson. The play will open Thursday, July 7 and run through Saturday, July 23 at The Chapel, 6238 Alexander, 63105. Performances will be Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm, with Sunday matinees July 10 & 17 at 2pm. Tickets will go on sale Friday, June 3 at MetroTix.com. Thursday tickets will be \$15, with Friday, Saturday and Sunday tickets \$20.

RODNEY'S WIFE is set in during a steamy summer in Rome, 1962, taking place over a day and a half in an Italian Villa full of sizzling secrets. Rodney, whose Hollywood stardom is beginning to dim, has arrived to star in one of the first, pre-Eastwood, Spaghetti Westerns. With him is his wife, Fay, who, as she arrives, isn't sure if she can last another day as just "Rodney's wife." And Eva, his sister, once married to Rodney's agent, but since his death, hanging on to her brother and her lifestyle, getting in anyone's way to do just that. And Lee, his daughter by his first wife, who, after ten years at girls' schools and college, is descending on the family. And Ted, Lee's fiancee, a surprise to the family and, somewhat, to Lee. And Henry, his new agent, with a pregnant wife back in the States, and a movie star to care for in Rome.

The New York Times called RODNEY'S WIFE "A full emotional geography of a family . . . Seemingly light conversation scrapes the skins of the characters in this sharply etched study of dislocation, loneliness and sexual betrayal." NewsDay said "Nelson is a master of the quiet detail, of the oblique rhythm that transforms emotional diffidence into fascinating character." And TimeOut New York said "The early scenes proceed with the closely observed simplicity of Chekhov, whereas the later more wrenching moments evoke the eloquent bitterness of Albee."

Kelly Howe will play Rodney's Wife, Fay. Kelly appeared in The Black Rep's SWEAT in 2021, and for that role was nominated for Outstanding Supporting Actress by the St. Louis Theatre Critics Circle.

John Wolbers will play Rodney. John directed Midnight's only-show-during-the pandemic production, SEX, DRUGS, ROCK & ROLL, and recently appeared in New Jewish Theatre's LAUGHTER ON THE 23rd FLOOR. Portraying Rodney's sister, Eva, will be Rachel Tibbets. Rachel has directed for Midnight - an earlier SEX, DRUGS, ROCK & ROLL run, and last year's TINSEL TOWN (Rachel was nominated as Outstanding Director by the St. Louis Theatre Critics Circle for this show, which was nominated for Best Comedy and won Best New Play), and acted with the Company - in LITTLE THING, BIG THING and JUDGMENT AT NUERMBERG. Rachel is a Co-Producer at Sate, where they just presented THE APHRA BEHN FESTIVAL, and upcoming, BRONTE SISTER HOUSE PARTY. (And she and John Wolbers are both with Prison Performing Arts, and they're producing LAERTES WORD at The Centene and THE TAMING OF THE SHREW at the Women's Correctional Center in Vandalia, both in June.)

Lee will be played by Summer Baer, who just appeared in PROOF at Moonstone Theatre. Ted will be played by Oliver Bacus, who was also in PROOF, and will be in THE ROSE TATTOO, coming soon at The Tennessee Williams Festival. And Henry will be played by Ben Ritchie, who was also in the cast of LAUGHTER ON THE 23rd FLOOR, and is directing and appearing in

KILL BILL VOL 1 & 2 LIVE PARODY, coming in June, from The Cherokee Street Theater Company.

Bess Moynihan will design the Italian Villa set and lights for RODNEY'S WIFE. Bess received a Theatre Critics Circle nomination for Outstanding Lighting Design for Midnight's 2017 TITLE AND DEED. Liz Henning will design the costumes. Liz designed costumes for last season's Midnight shows IT IS MAGIC and TINSEL TOWN (nominated for Outstanding Costume Design by the St. Louis Theatre Critics Circle for that show), and those are just two of the Midnight shows where she designed costumes or stage managed. And Liz will be designing costumes and stage managing Midnight's October show, ST. LOUIS WOMAN. Miriam Whatley will design props (she recently stage managed Midnight's ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCE.) And Kristen Strom will be RODNEY'S WIFE Stage Manager. She handled the same duties for last season's TINSEL TOWN.

Joe Hanrahan, Midnight's Artistic Director, will direct RODNEY'S WIFE. For Midnight, Joe has directed his own scripts of LIFE AFTER DEATH, THE BALLAD OF JESSE JAMES, LOVEMATCH, his adaptation of DRACULA, and several for the St. Louis Fringe and Crawl. He won Best Director from the Theatre Mask Awards for his direction of A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE for Clayton Community Theatre in 2017. He will direct his script, ST. LOUIS WOMAN, for Midnight in October.

Hanrahan said "I came across this play a few years ago, loved the setting, then fortunately, loved the play even more. The first name that came to mind when I read it was Bess Moynihan. I immediately felt she should be the one to create this setting, and she is. RODNEY'S WIFE hits the ground running. The play is 90 minutes, without intermission and it's a roller coaster. The Villa is filled with fragile people who, given the era, and the circumstances, politely avoid what is on everyone's mind. But as family secrets are exposed, this politeness manufactures considerable strain and quiet aggression. It's a devastating, emotionally rich piece of theatre."

Richard Nelson is an American playwright who worked with the Royal Shakespeare Company for a number of years, and had ten of his plays produced there. He's written several acclaimed trilogies of family life, including THE RHINEBECK PANORAMA, THE GABRIELS and THE MICHAELS. He wrote the books for the Tony Award-winning musicals JAMES JOYCE'S THE DEAD and CHESS. Mr. Nelson's also won Obie and Drama Desk Award recognition for several of his plays. He directs many of his own scripts, and directed the premiere of RODNEY'S WIFE in 2004.

For more information, visit MidnightCompany.com.