

MINT CELEBRATES AMERICAN WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS.

Check our website www.minttheater.org for more events and updates on times and dates.

SURROUND EVENTS:

Discussions last approximately 50 minutes and are open to the public free of charge.

Sunday, February 12 (following the matinee)

Rose Franken: Her Life and Work

Join Glenda Frank who teaches American literature and theater at FIT-SUNY for a discussion on the life and work of this once beloved but now forgotten writer. Ms. Frank writes the New York column for *Plays International* and reviews for New York Theater Wire.

Date TBA (check www.minttheater.org)

War Letters

Join Andrew Carroll, director of the Legacy Project — whose mission is to preserve correspondence from our nation's wars — author of *Behind the Lines* and editor of the volumes *Letters of a Nation* and *War Letters*, who will speak on the powerful and revealing letters soldiers have written during war and his search to find them.

Date TBA (check www.minttheater.org)

Working Women

Join us for a fascinating discussion on the employment of women and how World War II changed the American workforce.

Monday, March 27th Mint will hold a Special One-Night Only Reading of **THE AGE OF INNOCENCE**

Dramatized by Margaret Ayer Barnes from Edith Wharton's novel.

Margaret Ayer Barnes took up writing at thirty when she was convalescing from a serious accident at the encouragement of playwright Edward Sheldon. In 1929 her dramatization of Wharton's novel ran on Broadway for over 200 performances starring Katherine Cornell and Franchot Tone. Barnes and Sheldon then collaborated on two plays, *Jenny* and *Dishonored Lady*, which also starred Cornell. Barnes won the Pulitzer Prize in 1931 for her first novel, *Years of Grace*. Other books include *Edna, his Wife, Arms and the Boy* and *Perpetual Care*.

Edith Wharton is one of America's great writers. She is the author of *The House of Mirth*, *Ethan Frome* and *The Custom of the Country*.

Attend the reading only or plan to have dinner before the show with director Jonathan Bank and some special guests to discuss Wharton, Barnes, Cornell and their very special collaboration.

Call 212-315-0231 for more information or to book your seats.

Coming to Mint in June:

SUSAN AND GOD

by Rachel Crothers
Directed by Jonathan Bank

The story of a socialite who embraces a new religious philosophy while abroad and returns home eager to change everyone around her.

"Although it is rare now to find anyone who has heard of her, Miss Crothers at the apex of her career was a symbol of success in the commercial theater. Between 1906 and 1937, she saw close to 30 of her plays open on Broadway."
The New York Times

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

And SAVE THE DATE:

June 19th, 2006

Mint's Annual Benefit will continue our celebration of American Women Playwrights with a reading of excerpts from Ruth Gordon's Broadway play: **THE LEADING LADY.**

**FEBRUARY 7th
thru APRIL 2nd**

Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 7:00;
Fri. & Sat. at 8:00,
Sat. and Sun at 2:00



Artistic Director
Jonathan Bank
-presents

SOLDIER'S WIFE



By Rose Franken

**To order tickets call
(212) 315-0231**

Or visit our on-line Box Office:
www.minttheater.org

Performances at **Mint Theater**
311 W. 43rd St., 3rd floor

Set Design
Nathan Heverin

Costume Design
Clint E.B. Ramos

Sound Design
Elizabeth Rhodes

Lighting Design
Josh Bradford

Properties Design
Scott Brodsky

Production Stage Manager
Karen Hergesheimer

Dramaturge
Amy Stoller

Graphic Design
Jude Dvorak

Press Representative
David Gersten & Associates

Casting
Stuart Howard, Amy Schecter & Paul Hardt

Director: Eleanor Reissa

-PLEASE KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS-

I ordered tickets for SOLDIER'S WIFE for _____ 2006 @ _____pm.

Paid By: Visa/MC/Amex Check # _____

This Mint performance will be held on the 3rd floor at 311 West 43rd Street.

All tickets are HELD at the Box Office - available for pick-up starting ONE HOUR prior to curtain. NO LATE SEATING!

\$30 for performances February 7 - 12
\$35 for performances February 14 - 26
\$45 for performances February 28 - April 2

Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday at 7pm
Friday-Saturday at 8pm & Saturday-Sunday at 2pm

How to purchase your tickets for SOLDIER'S WIFE

- **By Mail or In-Person:** Mint Theater Company
(No Service Charges) 311 West 43rd Street, Ste. #307
New York, NY 10036
- **By Phone:** (212) 315-0231 (\$2.50 per ticket service charge will apply)
- **By Fax:** (212) 977-5211 (No Service Charges)
- **On-line:** www.minttheater.org (No Service Charges)
- **Call for special group rates (groups of 15 or more)**

BOX OFFICE HOURS
Now thru Feb 3:
Monday - Friday
12-6 pm
Beginning Feb. 6:
Monday - Saturday
12 - 6 pm
Sunday 12 - 3 pm

| Date | Time | # of Tkts. | Price | Total |
|------------|------|------------|--|-------|
| 1st Choice | | | X \$30 Feb 7-12 \$35 Feb 14-26 \$45 Feb 28-Apr 2 | = |
| 2nd Choice | | | I am also including a tax-deductible contribution | + |
| 3rd Choice | | | TOTAL | = |

*All sales are final. There will be no exchanges or refunds.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

*Phone (_____) _____ *For Confirmation

E-mail _____

Enclosed is my check made payable to **Mint Theater Company**

Please charge my Visa, MC or Amex

_____ - _____ - _____ Exp. Date ____/____

Signature _____



“A timely, provocative play about a husband back home from the war after being away for a year and a half.

In a sense, ***Soldier's Wife*** is a poignant love story—the struggle of a confused couple to recapture romance. And this is done not with mirrors but with merriment. The dialogue is suave and sparkling.”

(*New York Journal-American*, 1944)

SOLDIER'S WIFE

By Rose Franken

When Mint presented *Echoes of the War* by J.M. Barrie, audiences and critics alike were touched by the contemporary resonance of those WWI plays. Likewise, audiences may find that the war-time experiences of its central characters lend poignancy to *Soldier's Wife*.

THE AWARD-WINNING MINT THEATER BRINGS YOU

The Greatest Plays You've Never Seen

SUCH AS *WALKING DOWN BROADWAY*, *THE DAUGHTER-IN-LAW*, *FAR AND WIDE* AND *THE SKIN GAME*.

SOLDIER'S WIFE

By Rose Franken

Rose Franken was a professional writer for over forty years beginning with her novel *Patterns* in 1925, published by Max Perkins at Scribners, and concluding with her humorous book *You're Well Out of the Hospital* in 1966 when she was seventy-one. Franken was a Broadway playwright and director, as well as Hollywood screenwriter and novelist. She achieved fame and fortune as the author of the phenomenally successful “Claudia” stories, serialized in *Redbook* and *Good Housekeeping* and published in eight books between 1939 and 1957. In 1941 she dramatized the first book of the series into the play *Claudia* starring Dorothy Maguire, which ran on Broadway for 722 performances. In addition to the hit play, Franken wrote two movies, a radio and a television series about the life and love of Claudia and David Naughton and their family. Franken's other plays on Broadway included *Another Language* and *Outrageous Fortune*, which along with *Claudia* and *Soldier's Wife* were selected by Burns Mantle for his prestigious Best Plays annuals. Today none of her plays or books is still in print.

Soldier's Wife is a romantic comedy set against the back drop of World War II. John Rogers is the soldier; after 18 months in the South Pacific he has been invalided home and is greeted there by a baby boy who he is meeting for the first time and Kate, his wife who has learned self-sufficiency in his absence. Adjusting to the challenges of a new domestic equation is further complicated by the sudden and unexpected fame that is thrust upon Kate when letters she has written to John are published to great acclaim in a book entitled: *Soldier's Wife*.

While Franken was writing the play, her own son, only 24 years-old, had been away for three years on active duty. In an interview at the time, she talked about her son and other soldiers “—cut off from home ties for three, four, perhaps five years. What will the separation do to them? I have been reading his letters anxiously, trying to find out what is happening to him, whether he has changed, what he is thinking and feeling out there.”

The ever present awareness of the war-time ordeal of its central characters lends poignancy to *Soldier's Wife*, although the play, like most of Franken's work, is essentially the story of the joys and complications of married life. Kate's unexpected celebrity brings her glittering temptations and opportunities at the same time that her husband is trying to make the adjustment to civilian life and cope with his guilt about being on the sidelines while war is still being waged by his friends and comrades. “One of the most striking phenomena of the war,” Franken says, based on her own son's letters, is the friendships that develop while men are together under fire. “They want to be back with their friends.”

“A bright, sophisticated, intelligent comedy.”

The *New York Journal-American* described the play as both “a timely, provocative play” and “a bright, sophisticated, intelligent comedy. In a sense, *Soldier's Wife* is a poignant love story—the struggle of a confused couple to recapture romance. And this is done not with mirrors, but with merriment. The dialogue is suave and sparkling.” The *New York Post* called the play “a deft and amusing comedy...An unusually entertaining play, simple, unpretentious, intelligent and full of warm understanding of human nature and decent values, plus a constantly diverting sense of humor. In short, a thoroughly civilized comedy.” The *New Yorker* wrote that “Franken's dialogue fairly sparkles with wit and naturalness,” calling the play “a delightful and entertaining piece with a few moving sequences and several brilliantly humorous episodes.”

Mint has dedicated its season to bringing your attention to neglected American Women playwrights. Following the success of the World Premiere of *Walking Down Broadway* by Dawn Powell, we are now thrilled to cast the spotlight back on Rose Franken, an exceptionally talented and successful author who deserves to be remembered.

Rose Franken (1895-1988) Born Rosebud Dougherty Lewin in Gainesville, Texas. Her parents separated shortly after she was born so Rose and her three older siblings were raised in the family brownstone in Harlem. She was set to enter Barnard College in 1913 but instead she married Dr. Walter Franken. They spent their first ten months of married life at a sanitarium while her husband's tuberculosis went into remission.



Franken's writing career began by accident, when she found a mis-delivered typewriter on her doorstep and promptly wrote her first story. Her husband offered enthusiastic encouragement and she continued to write to amuse him. She gave immediate evidence not only of talent and craft, but of a keen business sense and a professional attitude.

Franken's play, *Another Language*, was produced in 1932 and was a surprising success, running for 453 performances. Her husband died the following year and Franken then moved to Hollywood with her three children, ages 13, 8 and 5, where she had a lucrative screenwriting career. In 1937 she married William Meloney, one of her Hollywood writing partners and they moved back east to a farm in Connecticut. There she wrote the first of her famous “Claudia” novels, which she dramatized in 1941. Franken directed the successful production, although she had neither training nor experience. “For an author to write a play and not cast and direct it is a little like having a baby and turning it over to a nurse as soon as it's born.

In 1943, Franken wrote the play *Outrageous Fortune*; her most ambitious play, quite daring for its portrayal of two homosexual characters—again she directed. When producer Gilbert Miller dropped the play after its Boston tryout received poor notices, Franken and her husband stepped in and brought the play to New York themselves. The play was acclaimed by some and condemned by others and closed after 77 performances. The following year Franken again teamed with her husband to produce *Soldier's Wife*, which she also directed.

(*New York Daily News*, 1944)

“is a delightful evening with some very pleasant people.”



311 W. 43rd Street
Suite #307
New York, NY 10036
www.minttheater.org



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