

THE CITY THEATRE COMPANY

is thrilled in presenting

Neil Simon's
**Laughter on the
23rd Floor**

The Max Prince Television Variety Show:

Lucas Brickman – Keith Yawn
Milt Fields – Doug Lebel
Val Skolsky – Craig Kanne
Brian Doyle – Judd Farris
Kenny Franks – Scot Friedman
Carol Wyman – Dawn Erin
Max Prince – R. Michael Clinkscales
Ira Stone – Gil Austin
Helen – Macey Mayfield

The Writer's Room on the twenty-third floor
of a building on 57th Street between Fifth and Sixth
Avenues. It is 1953.

There will be a ten minute intermission between acts.

Each act is approximately fifty-five minutes.

The play is intended for mature audiences with adult language and situations.

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The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

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2009 - 2010 Season Tickets.

Lee Hagan Teresa Matlock Mary Ann Crowley Michael Meigs
Robert Blanchette Aletha Huston Sue Tedford and Ted Flick
Jonathan and Lourdes Wooley Susan Fegley Mike and Sue Wood
JoAnn and Ed Farrell Sean Carr Milton and Barbara Carr Susan Fegley
Bert Flanagan Annie Zaffrann Stanley Seaton Alexandra R. Wood
Bill and Karen Warren Claire Brooks Randle Sparks Steven Weinberg
Patricia Drew and Paul Strelzick Carol Anne Thomas Clifford Walker

Additional Contributors.

Mr. Rick Crowley Mrs. Christine Lemp Dr. & Mrs. Ben Berkovsky
Mrs. Carmina Eaton Ms. Mary Ann Crowley Ms. Jennifer Bednorz Ashley Jorge
Mr. Jonathan Wooley Ms. Teresa Matlock Ms. Lisa Scheps Erik Virkkala
Concordia University Rodney & Donna LeRoy Mary Louise Donohoe
George & Linda Knapik Paul Strelzick & Patricia Drew Arts on Real Theatre
Keith and Debbi Anderson Washington Mooney Memorial Mark Banasau

Congratulations to City Theatre!!!

Nominated for eight 2008 – 2009 Austin B. Iden Awards for Excellence
in Theatre including Outstanding Production of a Drama for *Fences* and
Glengarry Glen Ross. Since our inception in 2006, The City Theatre
Company has been honored with thirty theatre nominations in acting,
directing, and overall production.

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The writers of The Max Prince Show

Kenny Franks was born in Chicago to Jewish immigrants from Poland. His father was a barber and his mother, may she rest in peace, did her best to put up with his father. Moving with his family to Los Angeles, young Kenny got his start writing for stand-up comics and pitching jokes to up-and-coming comedians. Then he got his big break and moved to New York to write for the Max Prince Show. Kenny is a studied genius. He never rushes the joke. His style is deliberate and dialogue driven. And while he thinks the guys in the writers' room are immature little children, he has the sense to realize that that's where all the creativity comes from. And damn it if he doesn't love the bastards.

Milt Fields, king of the one-liners, has been with the Max Prince Show since day one. With his flair for dressing and perfect comedic timing, he hopes to one day take Hollywood by storm, or sleep his way to the top. Always available, always open, always looking. Ba-dum-dum.

Lucas Brickman grew up in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee and, as the smallest of six brothers, learned the power of laughter at a young age. Moving to New York to study at Columbia University's prestigious School of the Arts, Lucas left college after only two semesters to pursue a career as one of the city's many starving playwrights. Surviving through two years of rejection by producers, Lucas booked his first play, *Bananas on Broadway*, in a small off-Broadway theater (way off Broadway – ok, it was in Queens) to less than thunderous acclaim.. The show ran for only four performances, but was unexpectedly seen, on closing night, by Brian Doyle, one of the talented writers of *The Max Prince Show*. Mr. Doyle recommended Lucas for an open spot on the show's writing staff, where he has worked for the past nine months. For him, it is a dream come true.

Val Skolsky was born in 1913, with some help from his Mother and Father, in Odessa, Ukraine which was part of the then Russian Empire. In 1926, he immigrated to the United States. So, in Russia before he was old enough to be bar mitzvahed, Val went through anti-semitic pogroms, World War I, the Russian Civil War, several Ukrainian independence movements, the founding of the Soviet Union, and the Russian famine of 1921. "This created the condition where humor becomes anger made acceptable with a joke, but I wouldn't exactly recommend it to aspiring comedians." After surviving all of that, what was left but to go into show business?

Carol Wyman grew up a loud, fat Jewish kid in a rough Italian neighborhood in Brooklyn. (My father never did have any sense of direction) Being funny was her salvation and her ticket out. She attended Columbia University on a cross-country bowling scholarship and graduated *summa cum laude* with a degree in writing. Thanks to connections made in school and lots of hard work she made her way up the ranks of the NBC ladder to the best job in show biz--writer for the mighty Max Prince. She sends love and gratitude to her husband Matthew Boaz Wyman for putting up with her crazy hours and constant one-liners.

Brian Doyle graduated from Columbia University with an MFA in Screenwriting and Treatment. This is his third year writing for *The Max Prince Show*. Previous writing credits include but are not limited to: *The Bob and Stan Hour (WXPA)*, *The George Zahn Show (ABC)*, and *The Carruthers Brothers Variety Show (NBC)*. He has finished his first full length play, *West Upton*, and is also working with MGM on several projects including his own screenplay, *Lines Heard On Vacation In Stockholm*.

Ira Stone's brilliant career began in radio as the lead writer on "The Pepsodent Hour Starring Max Prince" from 1932-1938. Following a series of hospitalizations for various complaints that doctors could not identify the cause of (and ultimately dismissed as chronic hypochondria), he was removed as head writer but retained by Prince at his old salary level. Stone later followed Prince to NBC and wrote for *The Max Prince Show*. Famous for long stretches of inactivity followed by explosions of genius, the erratic Stone is something of a legend among comedy writers, though actual sightings of him in the office working are as rare as sightings of unicorns, fairies, and mermaids.

Max Prince was born in Yonkers, New York to immigrant parents who ran a 23 ½ hour laundromat/luncheonette called *Ralph and Ida's Laundroluncheonette*. Their motto; *we only close for 30 minutes a day, what about you?* Max had the filthy and hungry patrons laughing by the spin cycle at his observational and ostentatious character driven humor. He soon added mediocre saxophone playing to his repertoire to entertain the customers. Max moved then moved on to pursue a career in music but was waylaid by the war. In the Navy Band his comedy routines, originally added to fill time between numbers, got more applause than his saxophone playing. Aaron Lieberman, the shows director, noticed his on-stage antics and later became the producer of Max's own hour and half Emmy Award winning comedy review TV show.

Helen was born in Norfolk, Virginia where she attended Norfolk High and was a pep squad captain for the Norfolk Bucks. She grew up tending to her ten younger brothers and sisters and, to the dismay of her parents, moved to the Big Apple immediately. She attended Miss Kitty's Secretarial Academy excelling in shorthand typing, message taking, and plant watering. Helen enjoys spending time alone in her Brooklyn one-bedroom and on Sundays off, she often visits the Bronx Zoo to remind her of childhood.

America at Mid-Century

The early 1950s were a magical time. The war was over. We were happy to be alive. And we were grateful. There was a feeling of hope and opportunity that permeated the country. There was a feeling of optimism. There was the sense that anything was attainable if you were willing to work hard enough for it. Walking around New York City, you could feel a tangible electricity in the air. Men all wore suits and ties. Women wore hats and gloves and dresses. There was a sense of style, of elegance, of belonging. But, in television entertainment....the times were changing.

From Sid Caesar's "Caesar's Hours: My Life in Comedy, with Love and Laughter."

The cast and crew of The City Theatre Company

Gil Austin's local stage work, includes his appearance last year in The City Theatre's production of *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Gil has performed comedy with burlesque troupes like Kitty Kitty Bang Bang and Big Star Burlesque, done voice work for anime and computer games, and had major roles in several indie films, including "The Magnificent Dead". Gil is currently editing and creating special effects for his first feature film, "Henchmen".

R. Michael Clinkscales is honored to make his City Theatre debut in *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* with such a talented ensemble. R. Michael studied acting, voice, and dance at Western Michigan University and continues to study with local talent. Some of Michael's favorite roles have been Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit*, Charlie Brown in *You're a Good Man; Charlie Brown*, the nerd in *The Nerd*, as Fagan in *Oliver*, and Melvin P. Thorpe in *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*. He loves working with kids so by day he is a social worker at The School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The adventure continues for Michael, in his favorite role, as father to his two sons, 12 and 10 years old, and two daughters, 5 and 4 years old.

Dawn Erin is delighted to be back on the City Theatre stage again. She was last seen as Kate in City's 2008 production of *Taming of the Shrew* and also performed as Amy Lee in *Laundry and Bourbon*. Favorite past roles include Mrs. Cheveley in *An Ideal Husband*, Olivia in *Twelfth Night*, and the title role in *Medea*. Dawn is a graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City and is represented by DVA Talent. She sends love and thanks to Matty, Billy and all her dogs, and dedicates her performance in this show to the memory of her Rottweiler mix Itchypup, who kept her laughing for 9 wonderful years.

Judd Farris received his BFA in Acting from Texas State University. He is an original member of The Theatre Collective, The Search Party and company member of Austin Shakespeare Festival. He would like to thank Andy and the cast and crew of *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* for their wonderful company, talent, and dedication. He would also like to thank his beautiful, talented, and brilliant wife, Bridget, for making his days on Earth a wonderful experience.

Scot Friedman, a native of Austin, Texas, began acting at an early age, performing in theatrical productions at the Old Gaslight, Zilker Hillside, and Zachary Scott Theaters. After an extended hiatus, Scot returned to his creative passion in an attempt to quiet the voices in his head. Scot has been featured in independent films, web series, radio and TV commercials, and animation voice-over projects. *Laughter* is his first theatrical production since returning to acting as an adult. He received his formal education in geography and earth sciences from the University of Texas at Austin, is an avid cyclist, and is a long-time practitioner of martial arts. Scot would like to thank his lovely wife, Leslie, for all the love and support.

Stage Production Crew.

Directed by Andy Berkovsky

Stage Manager/Assistant Director – Emily Toothman

Set and Light Design – Andy Berkovsky

Scenery Construction – Judd Farias, Bridget Farias

Craig Kanne, Scot Friedman and Emily Toothman

Costumes – Jessi Brill

Running Crew – Paul Arndt

Art work – Stacey Glazer

House Management – Kate Crowley

Assistant Management –

Jeff Hinkle, Clay Avery, Walter Pohlmeier

Publicity Design – Joey Solis and Rachel McGinnis

Music by the illustrious Benny Goodman

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

What you can say about one of the best cast and crews I have ever had the opportunity to work with as they grapple and do battle with the finest comedy writers of the stage and screen? Nothing, except that it has been such a (holiday) joy to work on *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* and I am truly grateful for every step of the way. If Broadway ever erects a monument to the patron saint of laughter, Neil Simon would have to be it. What a history for this legendary writer; first, churning out jokes for Sid Caesar's *Your Show of Shows*, where he worked alongside of Mel Brooks, Carl Reiner, and Larry Gelbart. Then, writing hit after hit for the stage and screen – *The Odd Couple*, *Sweet Charity*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *The Goodbye Girl*, *Plaza Suite*, *The Prisoner of Second Ave*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*; winner of four Tony Awards, two Emmys, a Screen Writers Guild Award and a Pulitzer Prize and holding the record for the greatest number of hits in the American theater. With all of this, he has kept us laughing for over fifty years. What is the secret to his success? That's hard to say. Maybe, between the lines of laughter, jokes, and bits, we come to find ourselves; a group of mixed up primates barely hanging on, but still able to take pleasure in remembering the joys and loves of this imperfect, yet remarkable world.

Have a terrific holiday season!!!

Craig Kanne has done many shows in Austin since moving here in 1980 to attend St. Edward's University. However, this is his first with the City Theatre Company. He recently finished what seemed to be a never ending performance with the City of Austin Water Conservation Department. He dreamed for a long time of being in the room with Caesar, Brooks, Gelbart, etc. working on comedy. Now he gets the chance, sort of.

Doug Lebel is originally from the east coast, where he performed up and down since age seven. He has won several regional acting awards for performances in *A Chorus Line*, *How to Succeed...*, *Singin' in the Rain* and *Amadeus*. In Austin, audiences have seen him in AMT's productions of *Annie* and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Doug also played the Emcee in *Cabaret* and Raul in *Extremities*. He has been nominated for the Austin Payne Awards and most recently played Brother Boy in *Sordid Lives* at Sam Bass. When he is not on stage his love is his sixteen year old schnauzer, Ethel.

Macey Mayfield was most recently seen as Shelly in *Evil Dead The Musical*. Other productions around town include *Little Shop of Horrors* with Summer Stock Austin, *Seussical* at Zach Scott, and *My Favorite Year* with Zilker. She is graduate of the Texas State University BFA Acting program where she appeared in several shows including *Company*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *A Chorus Line*. She is a two-time B. Iden Payne Award nominee. Thanks to Diamond and Cherry. Love you mom, dad, Mo and Granny.

Emily Toothman (Stage Manager) is honored to return for her fifth show at the City Theatre. Past shows include *The Heidi Chronicles*, *All's Well that Ends Well* - winner of Outstanding Ensemble in the City Theatre's Summer Acts! Theatre Festival, *Tartuffe*, and *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. She is thrilled to be working with yet another outstanding ensemble. She wishes to extend a special "thank you" to Andy and to her friends and family, who so faithfully support her in all her creative endeavors.

Keith Yawn is excited to be marking his first outing on the City Theatre stage with this incredibly comedic ensemble and talented crew. Keith has performed throughout central Texas. Memorable performances include *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress* (B. Iden Payne nomination), *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and the show that started it all, Neil Simon's *Fools*. He would like to thank the Austin theater community for continuing to indulge his theatrical curiosities, and sends heartfelt love to his family and friends for their support and encouragement.

Andy Berkovsky (Director) is a theatre graduate of Sam Houston State University with over twenty years experience as director, choreographer, designer, and teacher. A two-time B. Iden Payne nominee for Outstanding Director – *The Boys Next Door* and *Glengarry Glen Ross*. Past company member of Houston's Theatre Under The Stars, Stages, Miller Outdoor Theatre, and The Hilton Dinner Theatre. Eight time honoree as outstanding drama director raising over one-hundred thousand dollars through productions and contests and director of the two Texas state champion one-act plays *The Miracle Worker* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. He gives an endless thanks to his family who has shown all their love and support throughout these many years.



This Storyline Has Many Twists & Turns



The Austin Steam Train Association applauds the City Theatre Company and their great season of shows. When you want some entertainment with additional twists and turns, step aboard the train and take a trip down memory lane. Plus, enjoy the many special event trains throughout the year. Schedules and tickets available on the website. Hop online, then hop aboard!

RESERVATIONS

512-477-8468

www.AustinSteamTrain.org

A nonprofit volunteer organization.

City Theatre Production Staff.

Director & General Manager – Andy Berkovsky
Production Manager – Kate Crowley
Business Manager – Walter Pohlmeier
Technical Advisor – Daniel LeFave
Management Assistant – Samantha Brewer
Costume Design - Jessi Brill and Bert Flanagan
Publicity Design - Joey Solis
Production Assistants - Clay Avery, Jeff Hinkle and Stacey Glazer

2009 - 2010 Guest Directors.

Jeff Hinkle – *Hamlet*
Caleb Straus – *Buried Child*
Lisa Jordan – *A Raisin in the Sun*
Stacey Glazer – *How the Other Half Loves*
Daniel LeFave – *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told*

The Critics So Far.

“CTC’s first production *Frozen*...excellent.”
 “*Reckless*...just what the doctor ordered.”
 “*Parallel Lives*...will have you bent over with laughter.”
 “*Crimes of the Heart*...enjoyed this production more than anything else this year.”
 - **The Austin Chronicle**
 “*Glengarry Glen Ross*...notch up another success for CTC!”
 “*Alice in Wonderland*...a rollicking musical good time.”
 - **Austin Live Theatre**
 “*Fences*...theatre not to be missed.” - **Austin Live Theatre**
 “*Nunsense*...best show I’ve seen in the Austin theatre scene.”
 - **Austin On Stage**
 “...a treasure to be found within the realm of Austin theatre.”
 - **Caught In The Act Magazine**
 “City Theatre is adorable.” - **Austin’s Do512**
 Best Bets – **The Austin American Statesman**
 AC Pick – **The Austin Chronicle** Top Event – **Austin 360**
 Featured Event - **Now Playing Austin**
 Recommended Event – **Statesman XL**

2009-2010 THEATRE SEASON

Rabbit Hole by David Lindsay-Abares
Kick-Off Show **September 16 – October 4**

Hamlet by William Shakespeare
October 22 – November 15

Laughter on the 23rd Floor by Neil Simon
November 19 – December 20

A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry
February 25 – March 21

How the Other Half Loves by Alan Ayckbourn
March 25 – April 18

The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told by Paul Rudnick
June 10 – July 4

2010 Summer Acts! Theatre Festival July 8 – 18

Cat on a Hot Tin Roof by Tennessee Williams
July 22 – August 15

Into the Woods A musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine
August 19 – September 12

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