

burning coal theatre presents

TALLEY'S FOLLY

january 23 - february 9, 2020



**BURNING
COAL
THEATRE
COMPANY**
919.834.4001 BURNINGCOAL.ORG



Burning Coal Theatre is
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SO JUST WHAT IS A FOLLY, ANYWAY?

The word “Folly” has a couple of different meanings, both of which can apply to this particular play. After all, it is evident that Sally Talley's family sees her relationship with Matt Freidman as a folly, particularly in the “lack of good sense” meaning of the term. One might also see Matt's seemingly hopeless overtures to Sally as a similar form of folly.

However, another term that certainly applies to this play is that which applies to the ornate boathouse in which the action takes place. In the architectural sense of the word, a “folly” is defined as “a costly ornamental building with no practical purpose, especially a tower or mock-Gothic ruin built in a large garden or park.” Essentially, something that has no inherent use or right to be built in the first place.

A particular element of traditional follies is that they are built primarily for decoration. However, the appearance of the structure is decidedly non-decorative. As an example, you might find a functioning mill built in a garden that has nothing to mill, with no intention of grist ever being provided. Or the structure might be so incredibly extravagant that it seems completely unrelated to the garden as a whole.

The tradition extends back to 18th century gardening in England and France, when mock Roman Temples or Ruins would be constructed as a nod to the classical virtues. However, as the British and French Empires expanded, Chinese, Egyptian, and Tatar structures also became more common. Often rustic cottages were constructed, or even entire villages.

Follies in Ireland were generally built not as entertainment, but as a form of poor relief during times of famine. As opposed to providing a form of direct relief, which was resisted because the Irish were thought to be lazy, the building of a folly could be used to employ and support unemployed aristocrats and workers. This concept was extended into a series of literally useless public works called “Famine Follies.” These structures included piers in the middle of bogs, roads to nowhere, and other useless structures.



Temple of Philosophy at Ermenonville

SYNOPSIS

Talley's Folly is a one-act play that depicts one night in the lives of two sweethearts, Matt and Sally. It takes place on the 4th of July in the boathouse of the Talley farm in Missouri.

We begin with Matt directly addressing the audience, pointing out that the play will take ninety-seven minutes and hopes that the story will be relayed properly in that time. He takes some time to discuss the fancy, almost-gazebo-like structure, and tells everybody that he met Sally while on vacation last summer, and that he has sent her a letter every day. He has only received one reply, which gave him no romantic hope.



Photo from Original Production

Sally arrives at the boathouse upset and in disbelief that Matt has shown up uninvited, despite the fact that he wrote that he was coming. Matt, who is Jewish, has created a stir in the conservative Protestant Talley family. Matt has never lost interest in Sally, even driving to the hospital where she works unannounced and waiting, despite being told she was unavailable.

The conversation drifts to the boathouse. Sally explains it was built by her uncle, who was known for building follies all over town. Matt reveals that he has been in regular contact with Sally's aunt, and that he knows she was fired from teaching at the Sunday school for encouraging her students to read Thorsten Veblen's "The Theory of the Leisure Class" as well as the religious reader. Her reasoning that the rise of unions affected the children, caused issues with church elders as well as her own family.

Sally then tries to find out some of Matt's background. He finally admits that he was probably born somewhere near Kaunas, Lithuania. His father was an engineer who was tortured due to being overheard discussing his work with nitrogen, which would make the manufacture of gunpower inexpensive. The family was detained and tortured when trying to cross the border, until the French realized that they had no information to offer. However, Matt's sister fell into a coma. Matt managed to escape to America when his family was again detained by the Germans. He then swore he would never bring a child into such a world.

Sally then shares why she, an attractive young woman, has never married. Though she dodges by trying to discuss economics, she reveals that she was disappointed many years ago. She was promised to the son of a wealthy family. However, her family's fortunes waned and she was struck barren by a pelvic infection. The other family was no longer interested in the marriage.

Matt comments on the irony, but confesses his love. Sally agrees to marry him and move to St. Louis. They resolve to return to the boathouse every year to remember where they fell in love.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

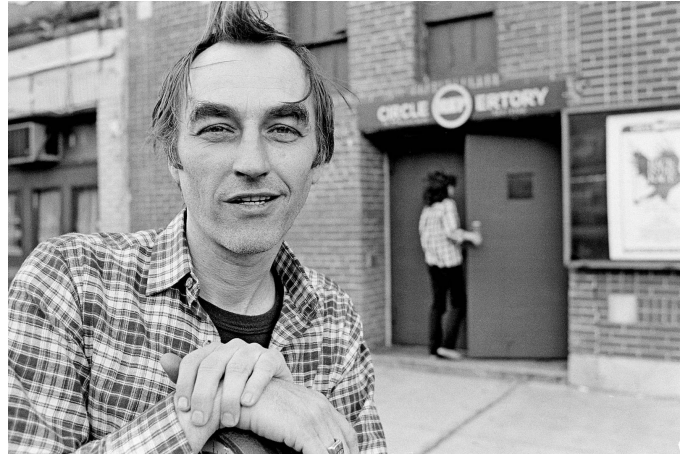
Talley's Folly was first performed at Circle Repertory Company in May of 1979, starring Judd Hirsch and Trish Hawkins. Directed by Marshall W. Mason. The production was then transferred to the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.

The play then moved to Broadway at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre in February of 1980. It ran for 286 performances before closing in November. There was a major revival of the play in 2013 at the Laura Pels Theatre. It premiered in London at the Lyric Theatre in May 1982, starring Hayley Mills and Jonathan Price.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lanford Wilson was born April 13, 1937 in Lebanon, Missouri. His parents divorced when he was five and he relocated to Springfield, Missouri, with his mother.

Wilson's first major success with a play was his 1964 *The Madness of Lady Bright*, which led to a variety of other works throughout the 1960's that varied widely in their themes. In 1969 he co-founded the Circle Repertory Company alongside Marshall W. Mason. Throughout the 1970's, he wrote many of the plays performed by the company. Their first major success was *The Hot I Baltimore* in 1973, which ran for over 1000 performances.



In 1978, his play *Fifth of July* was produced by Circle Repertory, and then moved to Broadway. For this run he received a Tony Award nomination. In 1980, Wilson received the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. *Talley's Folly* was written in 1979 but opened on Broadway before the *Fifth of July*.

Lanford Wilson is credited as being among the first to advance the Off-Off-Broadway theatre movement, and his works often began in smaller venues before making it to Off-Broadway, then Broadway. Further these plays often achieved national or international renown. He died in 2011.

THE COMPANY

Matthew E. Adelson (Lighting Designer) Previously for Burning Coal: The Container, Churchill's Shorts, Ashe In Johannesburg, Iphigenia in Splott, Darkside, Greek Trilogy, Written On The Heart, Dark Vanilla Jungle (London/Cockpit), 2016 2nd Stage, Spoonface Steinberg, Iron Curtain Trilogy (Raleigh and London/Cockpit), The Diary of Anne Frank, Ruined, Shining City, The Shape of the Table, The Seafarer, The Prisoner's Dilemma, Inherit The Wind, Pentecost, Einstein's Dreams (1998 and 2006 productions), Miss Julie, James Joyce's The Dead, The Man Who Tried To Save The World, Travesties, The Doll's House, and Romeo and Juliet. Recent credits include: The Goat or, Who is Sylvia? and Shrek, The Musical (Berkshire Theatre Group), The Three Musketeers (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey) and Curve of Departure (Chester Theatre). Matthew is the Production Manager for the Five College Dance Department (Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, Smith and UMass Amherst) and is a graduate of Yale Drama School.

Katie Beazley (Assistant Director) is a current intern with Burning Coal, and a recent graduate from Samford University with a BFA in Musical Theatre. She recently assistant directed Burning Coal's The Container by Clare Bayley. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support, the cast and production team for their hard work, and Burning Coal for this opportunity.

John Capetanos (ASM) is a Raleigh local who has been working with Burning Coal on a number of shows including The Weir, Ashe in Johannesburg, The Container, and most recently, Camelot.

Jerome Davis (Matt Friedman). For Burning Coal (Acting): Skylight, St. Nicholas, The Mound Builders, Loves Labours Lost, also Skylight in Orlando and King Lear (Lear) in Wilmington. (Directing): Camelot, Ashe in Johannesburg, The Weir (twice), Rat in the Skull, Pentecost, Winding the Ball, Steward of Christendom, Night & Day, Company, Road to Mecca, Juno & the Paycock, Accidental Death of an Anarchist, Taming of the Shrew, Inherit the Wind, Hamlet, Hysteria, Prisoner's Dilemma, 1960, The Seafarer, Shape of the Table, Enron, Jude the Obscure Parts 1 & 2, Shining City, The Heretic, Iron Curtain Trilogy (Raleigh & London), Sunday in the Park with George, Spoonface Steinberg, Written on the Heart, Dark Vanilla Jungle (London), Iphigenia in Splott. Other: Grounded (Sonorous Road), Twelfth Night in Apex and Turn of the Screw for NC Opera. Jerome has worked with or studied with Uta Hagen, Adrian Hall, Richard Jenkins, Hope Davis, Nikos Psacharapolous, Julie Bovasso, Ralph Waite, Oliver Platt, Ben Gazzarra and Ellen Burstyn. This is his 23rd season as artistic director of Burning Coal which he and his wife Simmie Kastner founded in 1995.

Madison Doss (Graphic Design) has a BA in English and an MA in Shakespeare & Education. Full time, she teaches English at Sanderson High and does graphic design/social media for Burning Coal. For Burning Coal: ASM – Darkside, Peter Pan & Wendy; Social Media – King Charles III, Stuff Happens, The Weir, The Container; Graphic Design – Stuff Happens, The Weir, The Container, Camelot.

Maddison Eberle (Assistant Scenic Artist and Carpenter). Maddison is a recent graduate from UNCW specializing in Scenic Painting & Design. Previous studies in classical arts have helped springboard her into the theatre scene. She has been a scenic painter and has designed two shows in Wilmington; The Cake at UNCW's second stage shows and Hamlet produced by Mouth of Babes Theatre Company.

Rebecca Edmonds (Production Stage Manager) Burning Coal Theatre: Talley's Folly, Camelot, Oakwood: 150 Years Young. UNCW Theatre: Good Kids, Hedda Gabler, Marian, or the True Tale of Robin Hood, The Children's Hour. She's super thrilled to be working on Talley's Folly and wants to congratulate a talented cast and crew. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Juan Isler (Sound Design) is a music business graduate of Winston-Salem State University. He has experience on and behind the stage. His acting ability was seen in The Container (BCT), The Wiz (BCT), Porgy and Bess (JTP), Memphis (RLT), and Ain't Misbehavin' (NRACT). His sound design was heard in Bent (JTP), King Charles III (BCT), Blood Done Sign My Name (RLT).

Barry Jaked (Master Electrician) has returned to Raleigh after two years as the Technical Director for Capitol Theatre in Aberdeen, South Dakota. He has been on the production team for over 20 shows with Burning Coal most recently "Camelot". Barry is thrilled to be back in Raleigh.

Danielle James (Props Designer). A native Delawarean, metalsmith, neon artist and maker. She moved here in 2011 and received her MFA from the metals design program at ECU. She is a neon apprentice at Glas neon studio in Raleigh and exhibits work internationally. With a deep love of theater, Danielle worked on set, costumes and props for performances across the U.S. Returning to Burning Coal after working props for King Charles III and Camelot, she is happy to be back in this awesome theater.

Meg Kessinger (ASM) After studying at UNCW, Meg moved to the Raleigh area to further pursue theatre in a professional setting. Meg has worked in a range of capacities for stage and for films, from performing and doing makeup to stage management and building sets. She is so excited to be tackling her second show with Burning Coal as an Assistant Stage Manager and would like to thank Jerry for the opportunity to work with an amazing cast and crew on Talley's Folly!

Eric S. Kildow (Study Guides) is Assistant Professor of Theatre at Kent State in Ohio and works as a freelance dramaturg & director. As an artistic associate of the London-based Loitering With Intent Theatre, he presented the devised work TurnRight/TurnLeft: A Manual for the End of the World at the Fleet Street Theatre in Hamburg, Germany. He is a member of the Stage Directors & Choreographers Society, Literary Managers & Dramaturgs of the Americas, Lincoln Center Director's Lab and Burning Coal Company of Artists. For Burning Coal: Man of La Mancha, Brigadoon, As You Like It, Shining City, Good, Ruined, The Heretic, (Three Man) Tempest, Jesus Fund, Diary of Anne Frank, Fayetteville Street, Outrunning Bullets, ASYLUM, The Wiz, Blue Sky, Spoonface Steinberg, Oakwood, Skylight, Written on the Heart, Heisenberg, The Royale, Darkside, Peter Pan & Wendy, Normal Heart, King Charles III, Stuff Happens, Ashe in Johannesburg, & Camelot.

Greg Osbeck (Technical Director). For Burning Coal: King Charles III, Stuff Happens, The Weir, Ashe in Johannesburg, Great Celestial Cow. For SAS: Stage Scenery for Temujin and 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea; NC Museum of Natural Sciences: Brimley Ball; Miss North Carolina Pageant: Set Design and Construction, Technical Direction; Office of the President of the United States: Set Construction at Camp Lejeune; RLT: Godspell; International Focus: International Festival of Raleigh Site Coordinator; and Dickens Pen and Ink: Dickens Festival Site Coordinator (Education) Ringling School of Art and Design, Majored in Sculpture. Courses in painting, printmaking, figure drawing, color theory. Self-taught scenic artist, welder, faux finisher.

Courtney Pisano (Assistant Stage Manager) For Burning Coal: Stage Management: KidsWrite (2018). Assistant Stage Management: Camelot, The Great Celestial Cow, Ashe in Johannesburg, The Weir, As You Like It, My Name is Rachel Corrie, Shape of the Table. Playwright: Oakwood Series (2019, 2018, 2017, 2016), KidsWrite (2013, 2009). Courtney is a Burning Coal Company Member and graduated from UNC Chapel Hill with a degree in Media Production – Go Heels! She would like to thank her dog, Abby, for no other reason, but that she snores so loud you have to turn up the volume on the TV.

Emily Rieder (Sally) For Burning Coal Theatre: The Weir, Skylight and SECCA. Some other credits include: Constellations, The Seagull, Crumbs from the Table of Joy (Bartlett Theater), Out of the Blue (Organic Theatre Co., Chicago), The Austerity of Hope (Abingdon Theater-NYC), As I Am Fully Known (NYC Fringe Festival), Lysistrata (Wings Theater- NYC), Noises Off! (Triad Stage). Emily holds an MFA in Acting from Northern Illinois University and a BFA in Acting from UNC- Greensboro. She is a Raleigh native and a proud company member of Durham’s Bartlett Theater. She currently resides in Greensboro with her husband Chris and daughter Rosie.

Meredith Riggan (Scenic Artist). Meredith is a North Carolina based artist excited to be returning to Burning Coal Theatre for Talley’s Folly. She has previously painted for Burning Coal in the productions of Camelot, The Container, The Great Celestial Cow, Ashe in Johannesburg, The Weir, Stuff Happens, King Charles III, Normal Heart, Peter Pan and Wendy, Darkside, The Royale, Heisenberg, Written on the Heart, Skylight, Spoonface Steinberg, The Wiz, and Good. After receiving her Bachelor’s Degree in Scenic Art from UNC- School of the Arts, Meredith has worked as the Scenic Charge Artist at several theatres around NC including Half Pint Theatre, Sweet Tea Shakespeare, Triad Stage, City Arts-Greensboro Children's Theatre, Winston Salem Theatre Alliance, ECU Loessin Playhouse, along with freelance jobs such as repairing sculptures for the Greensboro Children's Library and painting custom pet portraits through Riggan Originals.

Xinmeng ‘Sarah’ Sun (ASM) graduated from William Peace University in May of 2019 and majored Art Administration. In my free time, I really love to watch music or theater. I worked on Peace’s Wild Party, Five Women’s Wearing the Same Dress, Assistant, Beauty and Beast and Speech and Debate, mostly with props or on headset. I enjoy backstage work because I get to know the theater better and because every show needs crew people to make sure it runs smoothly. In the future, I hope to work at a theater or a museum, and am interested in the role of company manager, because this position allows travel and the opportunity to take care of groups.

Cole Train ("Paint Supervisor"). Cole Train is excited to be apart of another production at Burning Coal. He has been supervising his Scenic Artist Mom in theatres since he was 7 weeks old. He has no formal training in Scenic Art, but will retrieve a paint brush occasionally. He is great at supervising projects, looking cute, and tries to leave a paw print on every set. Cole Train is a 10/10 good boy.

Carry Vaughan (House Manager) has been the lead House Manager/Volunteer Coordinator with Burning Coal since 2013. Productions include Peter Pan & Wendy (ASM), The Normal Heart (ASM), and Dark Vanilla Jungle (Stage Manager—London’s Camden Fringe Festival, 2017).

NC STATE EDUCATION STANDARDS

The state of North Carolina values the skills and competencies of Arts education due to their applicability to other disciplines. These productions are designed to give your students exposure to the competencies and specific standards listed below.

This production and the related study materials will provide students with specific knowledge and skills to address the following Standard Course of Study Competencies and Objectives in the Theatre Arts.

- COMPETENCY GOAL 1: The learner will write based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history.
 - Grades 3-5
 - 1.02: Recognize the beginning, middle, and end of a story
 - 1.03: Infer lessons from multicultural stories, fairy tales, tall tales, legends, and myths.
 - 1.06: Refine reading comprehension by using verbal and non-verbal communication.
 - Grades 6-8
 - 1.01: Recognize and explain unique characteristics of the dramatic script such as dramatic structure and dialogue.
 - 1.04: Produce written, verbal, and visual responses to written and/or performed dramatic material.
 - 1.05: Identify themes and plots from multicultural literature.
 - Grades 9-12
 - 1.03: Compare and contrast play structure in relation to other forms of literature.
- COMPETENCY GOAL 7: The learner will analyze, critique, and construct meaning from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions.
 - Grades 3-5
 - 7.01: Build skills to critique self and others in a respectful and constructive manner.
 - 7.03: Convey personal reactions to various texts.
 - 7.05: Communicate emotions and thoughts evoked by performance.
 - 7.07: Suggest alternative characters, settings, or events after viewing or participating in a performance.
 - Grades 6-8
 - 7.01: Recognize and practice audience etiquette.
 - 7.03: Develop verbal, visual and written responses to works of informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions from various cultures.
 - 7.04: Express meaning perceived from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions.
 - Grades 9-12
 - 7.02: Develop and relate a world view of theatre in society.
- COMPETENCY GOAL 8: The learner will understand context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and present.
 - Grades 3-5
 - 8.04: Experience live or recorded performance
 - 8.05: Discuss the similarities and differences between live and recorded theatrical events.

Ashe in Johannesburg is also designed to address the following Core Curriculum Anchor Standards in Language Arts Literacy and Social Studies.

- Reading Anchor 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- Reading Anchor 6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- Writing Anchor 2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Writing Anchor 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.