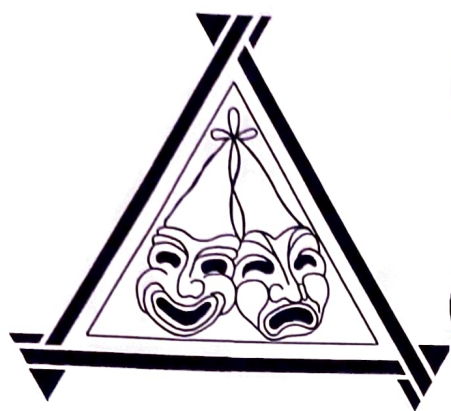




KANATA
THEATRE

PRESENTS

Steel Magnolias

by

Robert Harling



KANATA THEATRE
Season
sparkles
with next
production

Comforts of long relationships warmly realized

Steel Magnolias
 KANATA Theatre, 1215 Earl of March Highway
 Unit 100, St. Catharines, Ont. L9A 4K1
 Phone: 522-1715, Telefax: 522-1715

By Eric Wilkinson

You might call *Steel Magnolias* a two-time play, so playwright Robert Harling emphasizes laughter in Act I and tears in Act II. A come-drama of the term of a comedy, the play's reality is based on the reality of the relationships on stage. That reality is there in the warm and comfort-able Kanata Theatre production, which opened Wednesday.

The group of women who meet each Saturday morning in Truvey's beauty salon is a small Louisiana town. These ladies know each other well. They share gossip, love and are very much part of each other's lives. The three parties of acting Truvey's friends Tolley must give these extra special status because one of her regular customers, Shelly, is Jacqueline Hourigan is getting married. As M'Lynn, Rosemary Keneford, the mother of the bride and the best two neighbors, Christine Holland, a wealthy resident, dis-rupts the wedding and the future Shelly's passing is known as the dangerous shadow which looms reality in the following year.

Drenched with great concern for detail, by Brooke Keneford, this production gives a clear sense of the comfort of long-term relation-ships. These women really care about each other and their regular Saturday coffee-hour spent meeting is an important part of their lives. Because their connection and the emotional quality of the pro-duction are so evident, the script's melodramatic shift from comedy to tragedy is acceptable. Even so, it is a relief when M'Lynn's grief-struck on speech is cut short by a laugh.

Hourigan Keneford handles the difficult rare emotion speech ex-tremely well and while a little too fast in the early scenes, she and Hourigan develop the moth-er-daughter relationship effectively. Knight and carver offer fine light relief and Christine Holland as apprentice hairdresser Annette is also well suited to her role. Most believable of all and a good hair-ist is Tolley as the salon owner

KANATA THEATRE

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Steel Magnolias

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KANATA THEATRE Next production — a hair-raising experience

Kanata Theatre

Staging a play which is far better known as an inter-nationally acclaimed movie is never easy. In most cases, however, the play came first, making such an im-pression on its small audience that it ultimately inspired a movie director to turn it into a blockbuster. Such was the case with Robert Harling's *Steel Magnolias*, first staged at the WPA Theatre, New York City, on March 22, 1982.

Steel Magnolias is set in a beauty salon in Louisiana. It centres around a cast of six women of varying ages and backgrounds, their loves, lives and losses. The play explores the lives and characters of all six who are united by a feisty self-con-fidence, strong southern humor and strength when faced with the inevitable setbacks in life.

Brooke Keneford directs this poignant, warmhearted comedy with some of Kanata Theatre's most ac-complished actresses:

- Truvey — Gwendy Talley
- Annette — Christine Holland
- Clairee — Gwen Knight
- Shelly — Jacqueline



Rosemary Keneford

Hourigan

• M'Lynn — Rosemary Keneford

• Ouiser — Dorothy Gardner

• Rhett — Dino Keneford

Christine Holland and Jacqueline Hourigan bring their talents to Kanata Theatre's stage for the first time in this production, along with Dino Keneford.

Dino is the only male member of the cast, who is not seen by the audience, but will definitely make him-self heard in the role of Rhett.

This beautifully written play will run Jan. 12-15, at the Earl of March Theatre. In order to reserve a good seat, call early before Christmas, Kanata Theatre box office, 592-1715.

KANATA THEATRE
 Season sparkles with next production

Kanata Theatre
 "Come and develop a Truvey's carpet beauty shop where eccentric Louisiana ladies can have companionship with their cutures and give each other mutual support while having a shampoo."

Brooke Keneford directs Kanata Theatre's upcoming production of *Steel Magnolias* by Robert Harling. This sparkling comedy will be on stage at the March Theatre. Call Kanata Theatre to reserve a seat for the next production.

Gwendy Tolley and Jacqueline Hourigan in rehearsal for Kanata Theatre's new production in its Silver Anniversary season *Steel Magnolias* Jan. 12-15, 1992.

Steel yourselves away for a night of tears and laughter

Kanata Theatre

Steel Magnolias tells the story of a typical young woman from a small American town in the Deep South. Enter a world where the men shoot at anything that moves and the women support and sustain each other from one generation to the next at the regular meeting place no man dares to enter — the town's beauty salon.

Shelly (Jacqueline Hourigan) is the central character. Glib and glossy, curled, manicured and dressed in shades of pink like the magnolias of the title, she only wants to please her man. Her Mother, M'Lynn (Rosemary Keneford) un-tilly attempts to shelter her daughter from the realities of her fragile grasp on life.

Truvey (Gwendy Tolley) is the bright and bubbly owner of the Beauty Salon, which she runs from a converted carport. Her assistant Annette (Christine Holland) is a sad soul who finds solace in religion. She is a newcomer to town, and her gentle presence allows the other characters arriv-



Christine Holland as Annette and Rosemary Keneford as M'Lynn in *Steel Magnolias*. Anita Antonucci photo

ing at Truvey's (Gwen Knight as Clairee and Dorothy Gardner as the formidable Ouiser) to reveal their lives, growing up together, while receiving tea, sympathy and a shampoo and set.

Kanata Theatre audiences will be enthralled by this warm-hearted play, which is neither sentimental nor slushy, but more about hope, and life going on — a play that allows laughter to break through the tears, and does not end on a sad note.

Steel Magnolias, directed by Brooke Keneford, will be on stage Jan. 12-15 at the Earl of March Theatre. To ensure a good seat call Kanata Theatre box office at 592-1715.





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Jan 1994

























