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Kate West, Editor

The Rehearsal Club's 110th Anniversary Gala



A Night Like No Other

History sang and danced its way into the 110th Gala Celebration of The Rehearsal Club on October 20th. Upon arrival, guests drifted through our elegant venue, The Players, one of New York City's most stunning, historic mansions. With a drink in one hand and a luscious canapé in the other, guests rubbed elbows with models in celebrity gowns while gazing at historic theatrical memorabilia and portraits of some of the city's most elite citizens, including some by John Singer Sargent.

But even Sargent couldn't compete with the energy and talent that filled the

stage as our live TRC musical revue traced 110 years of history of the club's impact on the American Theater.

Seeing TRC women performing on the same stage – close to 60 years apart in age – holding hands in their shared song and dance sequences still gives me shivers. It was moving, it was breathtaking, and it was the true essence of The Rehearsal Club.

We are ever grateful to our intrepid cast of performers. TRC's special thanks go to our gracious host for the evening, TRC Charter Member Blythe Danner, and our surprise guest, fellow TRC Charter Member Sandy Duncan, who engaged in a lively and humor-filled interview with Blythe.

With deepest thanks from TRC's Board to all
who have worked so hard getting us to where we are today.



Gale Patron

Gale Patron, President



Cynthia Darlow



TRC Residents



Charla Hayen,
Dolores Gordon,
Sunny Keyser



Mary Lou Barber,
Diane Findlay

Photos by Francine Mancini

Follow the link below for more great photos of the celebration
and to read the *Broadway World* article on TRC's 110th Gala.

[Broadway World](#)



TRC's Wardrobe Sale 2023

**"THE CLOTHES MAKE
THE...WOMAN!"**

TRC's 110th Anniversary Gala marked the re-launch of the beloved Wardrobe Sale after a 44-year hiatus. A Silent Auction of stunning items donated by luminaries including Bob Mackie was a fitting preview of the next day's Wardrobe Sale. Proceeds from the Silent Auction at the Gala on Friday night and the Wardrobe Sale at Metro Baptist Church on Saturday, netted thousands of dollars to benefit TRC's future programming.

Offerings at the Wardrobe Sale included a dress designed for Kate Winslet for the film *Mildred Pierce* and a spectacular pink cocktail dress from NY City Ballet prima ballerina Allegra Kent. Original fashion designs by Giorgio Armani, Ann Taylor, Ellen Tracy, Betsy Johnson and dozens of others were donated by Rehearsal Club Charter Members, friends and relatives of Members – people who value the affordable pricing of the Wardrobe Sale and who want to honor the Wardrobe Sale's history and support its future,

A colorful display upstairs in the Metro Baptist Sanctuary told of the history of TRC's Wardrobe Sales. There was a lovely table with photos of Phyllis Jeanne Creore Westermann and Alice Middleton Anderson, a note from Lillian Gish, a 70's press release about that year's Wardrobe Sale, Melinda Tanner's iconic photo of the Club, and other intriguing and historic memorabilia. On display was the "One Dress" that was regularly shared amongst Rehearsal Club Residents and a hat and gown worn by Ethel Barrymore. *Cinderellas of West 53rd Street* was made lovingly available by Denise Pence, and Charla Hayen's cards added to the beauty of this special day.

Thank you to the WARDROBE SALE COMMITTEE consisting of Judith Curcio, Michele Mason, Michele Smith, Margaret Strom, Denise Pence and Cameron Taylor. Special thanks to Kathleen Conry for concept and organization of all; and to Metro Baptist Church which made this

Wardrobe Sale possible.

Our thanks to all who attended, those who donated wardrobe, and to those who volunteered to make this a fantastic event.



Membership Drive and Dues for 2024

Fresh from our 110th Anniversary Gala, the Rehearsal Club Membership Committee is pleased to open our 2024 Membership Drive! Starting in 2022, the Membership Committee has made strides in bringing all memberships, especially those who have chosen Anedot auto renewal, into a calendar year renewal. So, ALL memberships will need to be renewed either by check in the mail or by credit card on Anedot to commence Jan 1, 2024.

We are so proud to now have 84 Charter Alumnae Members on our active roster, 10 new Alumnae Members fresh out of our resurrected Residency Program and 45 General Members in our non-resident, professional performance and related fields membership. This is the ideal time for all TRC members to reach out and recruit new General Members to join our ranks and support TRC's mission.

We are only as strong as our Membership. Thanks to each of you, we are stronger every day; active Membership has more than doubled in just over 2 years!

We look forward to each of you adding to your end of year tasks by renewing your TRC membership for 2024. When you do that, we would also appreciate your joining a committee to help us further our mission by sharing your wisdom and skills with us. We are all volunteers in this together. We depend on each other to keep TRC going and growing in the right direction!

ROOFTOP MEMBERS' PARTY September 13, 2023



Michele Mason, Kathy Conry, Ellen Zalk, Margaret Strom, Linda Cool, Denise Pence, Gale Patron, Debbie Andrews, Terry Baughan, Diane Findlay, Andrea Frierson, Cynthia Darlow, Francine Mancini, Pat Cody, Michele Mais seated



TRC Celebrates Its Members' Connections to *Frasier* Then and Now

Paramount+ and CBS relaunched the iconic series *Frasier* in October, and TRC has connections to both the original *Frasier* and the reboot. TRC Honorary Board Member Bebe Neuwirth will reprise her star turn as Frasier Crane's wife Lilith in the new reboot. Another TRC Honorary Board Member, Celia Weston, appeared as a guest star on the original series.

It is TRC Charter Member Patricia Hill who has the deepest connection to the original series. A pioneering female cinematographer, Patricia worked on a number

of iconic sitcoms during her career. Now she shares some of her memories and experiences on the set of the original *Frasier* in her own words.

Frasier Crane and I appeared on *Cheers* at about the same time. After years doing movies, music videos, episodics and commercials, I wanted to move up, and heard this new show might need a film camera person, so I dropped by their rehearsal on Stage 25. They asked me to hop on a camera and pull focus – an audition! – had never done one on camera before. Must have worked, they hired me, even though they hadn't had a woman on the crew before.

Cheers was a crazy blast. Bebe Neuwirth, Rhea Perlman, Kirstie Alley and I used to work out together in a little *Cheers* gym on the stage. When it ended years later (even though the Frasier character was the least liked), the writers David Angel, Peter Casey and David Lee wanted to spin it off. It was a classy comedy with art, music and literature as a backdrop, but at its heart it was about a blue-collar father, and dysfunctional, highbrow brothers and how they got along. Camera came along for the ride, but we never thought it would make it big like it did.

A totally different set, instead of the actors throwing spitballs at each other, we would hear Kelsey play jazz on the piano at lunch. Or if we heard classical piano being played, that meant David Hyde Pierce was practicing.

One of the writer/directors, David Lee, loved Broadway, and over the eleven years I met every Broadway star I had ever admired.

On 9/11 our beloved David Angel and his wife Lynn were on the first plane to go into the Towers coming back for show day, and everything became more intense. David Hyde Pierce expressed it best. It was imperative to have a reason to laugh again, and it was up to *Frasier* to honor this wonderful man.

The show also had a booth where celebrities would be the voice that called in to the Frasier radio show. The Rehearsal Club's Marsha Kramer would come in – plus have special on-camera parts, that gave my old TRC roommate and friend and me time to visit. Patti LuPone's cousin came up to me when Patti was on the show and said I had taught her how to use curlers to roll her hair at The Rehearsal Club!

These were the golden years for sitcoms. So happy to see they are continuing the *Frasier* story on CBS this fall and wish the show much luck.



Remembering the Blackout!

By TRC Charter Member



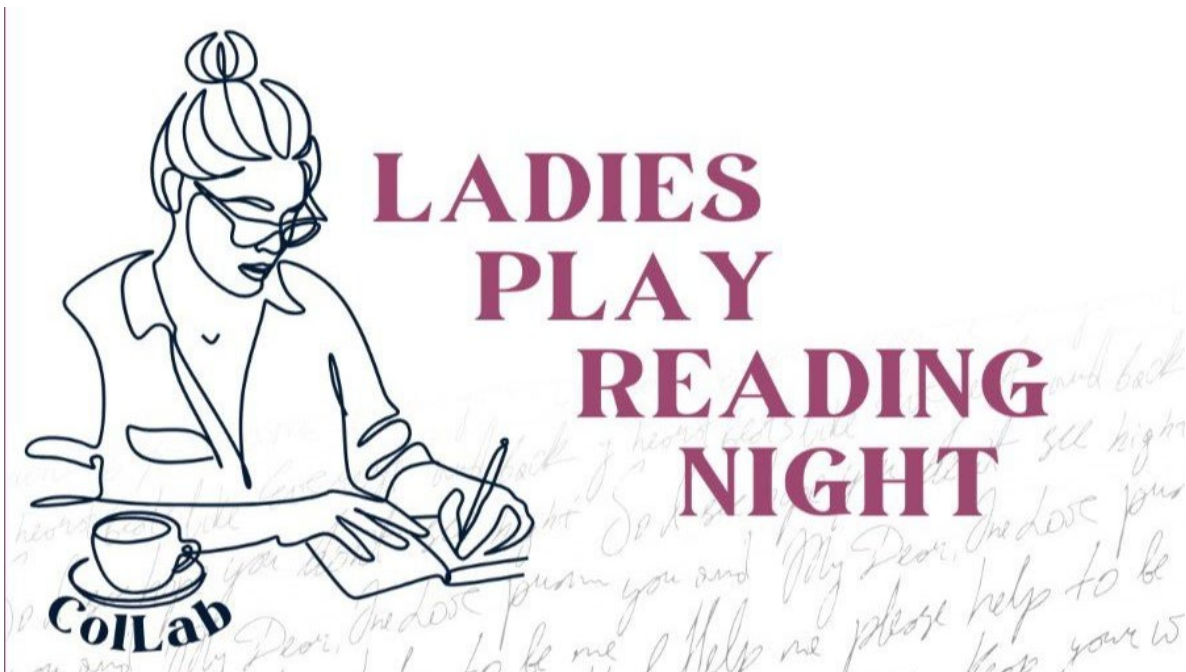
Margaret Strom

Next Thursday, November 9 is the anniversary of the 1965 Blackout in NYC! Where were you and what were you doing? I for one was walking up 5th Avenue on my way back to the Club

after my classes at The American Academy of Dramatic Arts. Suddenly it was pitch black out and people came pouring out of buildings, so much so, I thought I was going to get pushed in! I hastened my steps as best as I could to get to 53rd Street and rushed down towards #47! I had tears in my eyes as soon as I saw the building and all the candles in the lower windows of the dining room...welcoming us all back into our safe haven! THAT was TRC!

Were YOU caught in the infamous NY Blackout 11/09/65? Send your experience by email to voicemargaret@verizon.net

Affiliate News From Our Friends at Off The Lane



Gals! Folks! Everyone!

We're honoring female playwrights with a communal table reading of *You Got Older* by Clare Barron. Roles will be assigned upon arrival. Enjoy free snacks, beverages, and mingling with your fellow artists!

WHEN & WHERE
Tuesday, November 14
7pm–9pm at [Meaux Space](#) in NYC

*This event is only open to ages 18+ due to mature sexual content in the play.
Content Warning: mention of rape, graphic sexual content, and cancer*

Click the button below to RSVP.

RSVP

TRC Standing Strong With SAG-AFTRA



On the SAG-AFTRA picket line in NYC, three TRC members. One General Member, Dani Carr, one current Rehearsal Club Resident, Genevieve Wisdom, and one Charter Member, Margaret Strom.

In Memoriam

Donalyn Petrucci, by TRC Charter Member Francine Mancini

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Donalyn Petrucci, or Sunshine, as we knew her at The Rehearsal Club. Sunshine was my first roommate at TRC in 1974, and although she was only a year older than me, she seemed so

much more experienced and wise. We would have talks late at night, and I remember her opening my eyes to so many ways of the world and insights into show biz.

Everyone called her Sunshine, which she was. I didn't even know her real name for quite a while. TRC Board Member Linda Cool, who also roomed with Sunshine in 1977–78, recalls, "I remember when she and her boyfriend helped Addie Famble move out of her apartment into Mrs. Yip Harburg's home on CPW, and how she cried when she described the truly horrific conditions in Addie's building." Sunshine was a wonderful, loving and talented person. She will be missed. Further info is in the obituary link below.

Donalyn Petrucci Obituary

Welcome to TRC's New Members

Janet Stilson: Janet was recommended to us by General Members Terry Lawler and Susan Steiger. She lives in NYC's Riverdale area, is a journalist, writes scripts and short stories and has a very popular blog, where she has already posted a great piece on TRC. Be sure to check it out! A consultant and researcher on the business of Media and Entertainment, Janet is a former NYWIFT Board Member and has graciously agreed to fill a one-year vacancy on TRC's Board.

Judy Toma: Judy Toma is from Woodland Park, NJ, and was recommended to us by Charter Member Cameron Taylor. Cam and Judy first performed together many years ago in *The Sound of Music*. Judy is an active member of SAG-AFTRA, and after attending our Gala in October, is the proud winner of the Silent Auction bids on both the Bob Mackie pieces and the Canadian fisher fur coat! Great start, Judy!

Lifetime General Membership – Evadne Giannini

The Rehearsal Club is pleased to announce its first Lifetime General Membership, granted to Evadne Giannini for her outstanding contributions to the development of our professional organization. In 2019, Evadne was introduced to the story of The Rehearsal Club by her great friend Cynthia Darlow. Evadne, a planner and strategic development professional, picked up the gauntlet and for the next 18 months devoted herself tirelessly to the development and execution of TRC's corporate bylaws, our strategic plan and the 12-month matching campaign that led to our Residency Program.

Special Thanks

We have many to thank for the success of our 110th Gala Weekend. Let's all raise a glass to: Michele Mais, Virginia Seidel, Denise Pence, Gary Olson, Mike Levine, Judith Curcio, Jackie Gautreaux, Connie Tais, Ellen Zalk, Magda Katz, Kathy Conry, Charlie Siedenburger, Lee Kelley, Maria Mallman, Michele Mason, Mike Kanesmith, Cam Taylor, Sheryl Foster, Margaret Strom, Linda Cool, Terry Lawler, Michele Smith, Sunny Keiser, Glenn Patron, Charla Hayen, Kate West, Dan Fickett, Maria Elena de la Noval, Dolores Gordon, Jamila Dphrepaulazz, John Charles Kelly, Raymundo, Nicky Sunshine.

Also, to our special advertisers Sprinkles and Jean Blevins Studios, The Little Pie Company and Metro Baptist Church, to our incredible sponsors, the silent auction donors and those who donated divine wardrobe pieces. Heartfelt thanks to our Silent Auction models Julia Adams, Ramona Mallory and Isabella Stansbury, who wore items donated by Bob Mackie and others with such style and grace. Kudos and thanks to TRC Residents Alyssa Payne, Shawnee Fierros Casas Richberger, Sophie Sarnacki and Chelsea Weaver, who performed at the Gala. TRC is beyond proud to showcase their talents and to show the world TRC's continuing legacy.

Finally, to Leslie Shreve, who had the vision to act as our sponsor at The Players.

Apologies to Cynthia Darlow

With profound remorse we regret the name above the bio for Cynthia Darlow in the Gala Program was mistakenly listed as Margaret Darlow.



Our Company will be tackling *King Lear* this month with our own TRC Charter Member Cameron Taylor playing Goneril. See an excerpt below:

<https://youtu.be/2TX9Bv1We4A?si=LB7M-f6-NOPTBGPO>

Hosted by TRC Charter Member Denise Pence and Boockvor Productions, these readings began under the TRC umbrella during COVID and, by popular demand, have continued through Boockvor Productions, reading 23 of the Bard's canon to

date. Many TRC alums (past and present) have joined us over the years and all of you are always welcome.

Click the link below for a sample of what we do: Prince of Morocco (Denise Pence) and Portia (Melissa Eddy Quilty) from *Merchant of Venice*. The Prince is the first suitor to choose the wrong box when vying for Portia's hand in marriage. Enjoy!

<https://youtu.be/nZrUJC6-Rdo?si=01Ro2pcRgq4rnLig>

We start the Henry's in January. Visit the [Boockvor Productions](http://BoockvorProductions.com) website for more pictures and videos. Questions? Contact denise@denisepence.com. Hope to see you in the room where it happens!

TRC Workshops

Meditation and Mindfulness



Hosted by Charter Member Michele Mason
Thursdays 2:00 - 3:00 pm EDT

Highly recommended to reduce stress and help to bring you into a state of true Zen.

Meeting ID: 893 7192 9670
Passcode: 274595

Thank you, Michele, for sharing your amazing gift with us every week! This Workshop is a special place to collect, reflect and commune.

[November Zoom Link](#)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Calling all TRC Members

We are in the throes of all kinds of activities and we NEED volunteers from among our membership to serve on our many committees. If you have any time, or ideas or enthusiasm to spare, please contact Margaret Strom at voicemargaret@verizon.net.

TRC is in all our hands and we need yours! Please Help!

Goings On Is Now Bi-Monthly

TRC's Newsletter Is Now Bi-Monthly.

Due to the Holidays, the deadline for the January 2024
Newsletter has been moved up to December 10

Please send to trc.newslettersubmissions@gmail.com
Text submissions should be Microsoft Word documents.

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