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#### trodding the boards ...from M-20

to ponder.

Playing their cell block guard Shawna DuChamps is Angie Joachim, who in police uniform with billy club gives one of the best performances of such a role as I may live to see. She is magnificent in a beating scene and a magnetic presence in every other one she does. Ms. Joachim makes a small part into a monument to gifted actors everywhere; this is what she does in this role and nothing less.

Not only one of our town's best actors and playwrights, Mr. Santos designed the stunning set for this show with a minimalist idea and perhaps a small budget. But what he did with a few yards of page fencing, bunk beds separated by a faux cement half wall and extensions of the playing area stage right and left and from stage center into the audience like a cat walk for models was astonishing. The very simplicity of the concept captured the essence of the script's soul searching plot and the ambience, with few materials, of a prison cell, a nearby bar away from the prison and two areas for a **New York Times** reporter to interview Santos about his role as prison journalist. The reporter, Sam Fried, was convincingly played by Kris LaMorte who also demonstrated how a smaller part can be so polished and burnished as to shine like gold in every scene.

This play was an explosion of dramatic expertise and theatrical art on the stage of Delgado Community College. Drama Hall, 3rd Floor. The show was done in conjunction with Inside Out Productions, a local company founded in 2005 by four UNO alums, Mike Harkins, Ashley Ricord, Michael Aaron Santos and Jim Winters.

#### Private Eyes

It would be hard to find a better group of actors playing actors who are actors in certain scenes who then become non-actors in other scenes in the very excellent production of **Private Eyes** playing at Southern Rep Theatre under the auspices of Golden Eagle Theater Company. Think Pirandello updated and then rush over there and see this excellent show.

It's the old story of young married actors who get into an unadulterated mixup of adultery or maybe not. It was my impression that the playwright (Steven Dietz) meant

nothing to be totally defined in this brilliant example of his writing of a play withing a play within a .....? It's a script mindful of a room full of mirrors facing mirrors and one is not sure before which mirror stands the real item (or scene or person) causing the reflections in the others.. Reality vs. fantasy, yes, very Pirandello. If you are a theater patron who appreciates really original drama with a dollop of the fantastic or if

you're an actor and you can put your own ego aside long enough to enjoy a real play and great acting, rush to Southern Rep for this one. After all **Private Eyes** is about three actors, a director, the director's wife (also an actor, a dick, or private eye and the subject of adultery) and a female shrink named Frank who seems to know them all profes-

[continued on main-22]



Leon Contavespie, Angela Papale, Keith Launey & Liz Mills in *Private Eyes*  
(Photo: Andrew Elliott)





## THE pink PASTOR

by Rev. Clinton Crawshaw, 504.214.4340  
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[www.thebigeasymccblog.blogspot.com](http://www.thebigeasymccblog.blogspot.com)

### Go for Growth?

I have been faced with an unusual dilemma; and it goes to the very heart of how we see religion, and especially, for me, Christianity.

At The Big Easy MCC we have just taken on 10 new members, meaning in just ten months we have tripled our membership. I know this is a source of rejoicing, and people are going to write me off as mad if I question it, but whilst I rejoice, I am being very careful to examine exactly what sort of growth we seek, and how we go about getting it. You see, as I preached on Sunday, there are two very different types of Religion (not just Christianity) and the question of growth and evangelism is often key to which type a church ends up being.

There is one type which believes that because the vast majority of humanity is doomed to burn, then 'saving souls' must come above all else – it also believes that this end justifies almost any means – people are threatened with hellfire and bribed with a sort of heaven that looks like Liberace's boudoir. This sort of religion puts growth in numbers above all else, and doesn't especially care how people come to be in church or to recite the formula of 'giving their lives to Christ' as long as they go through the motions. This sort of Church is quite able to pack in astonishing growth rates, and often becomes a 'mega church' because it is offering consumer religion; a program of spiritual entertainment geared up to keep the folks orthodox, controlled and of course, terrified of hell.

There is another form of religion, a type I desperately want our little church to reflect; this type is patient – it understands salvation is a journey that all are traveling on, and it may take people a long time to decide to travel together. It is generous and trusting and not about rules – it trusts God to change where change is needed. In this sort of church evangelism is concerned with Good News, not the bad – it is also much more about witness, about being different and modeling the qualities it claims for Christianity in order to attract, not bullying or bribing. Bertrand Russell said 'Neither *a man nor a crowd, nor a nation can be trusted to act humanely or to think sanely under the influence of great fear*' – churches are the same; 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love' [1 John 4:18] and if God is love we cannot form a relationship of

loving trust if we believe God may throw us into eternal torture at the slightest whim. One religion plays games with fear, and uses fear as a means to an end – the other type rejects fear as incompatible with love and is content to patiently await the privilege of journeying together with someone, and does not need to force their hand with threats.

There is always a temptation as a Pastor to do something that *works* in order to get folks to come to church; even if their coming to church has little to do with their growing in God, or deepening their relationship with God. Sometime it is just 'fire insurance'. Pastors often regard this as *ends justifying means*, but once people have been conned or deceived or mistreated it is likely to distort their whole future growth.

I have also been tempted; I can preach about the wickedness of organized religion and the warmth and safety of our little island of faith and I know it will bring a response, it will play to people's fears and wounds and although people often need their experience affirming, if I am not careful then that sort of sermonizing will diminish me and the Church I am trying to help build.

Our opponents in the movement to include LGBT people in the Christian journey are not horned devils anymore than we are – they are variously ignorant, honest, frightened, deluded, sincere and confused but not demons. We have ultimately more in common with them as fellow travelers and human beings than we have dividing us and I am praying for a church that will embrace enemies, love difference and seek growth in depth and love as strongly, or more strongly than growth in numbers.

So far I have been fortunate that our growth rates have been gradual enough that we can bring people in as family, that we can socialize with each other, eat together and form the 'ties that bind' in a way that has keeps up with our increase in numbers. My prayer and concern is that we keep this sort of growth uppermost in our minds, and are patient to allow people to come to us at their speed – not ours.

There are six and a half billion journeys going on, and if I, through my impatience, end up being a stumbling block to any one of them then I don't deserve to pastor a church; if the God I claim to serve is all I claim, then truth will out and the God of endless love will in the long term prove as attractive to others as it is to me and our family at The Big Easy MCC.

Rev Clinton Crawshaw is the Pastor of The Big Easy Metropolitan

### trodding the boards ...from M-21

sionally, but don't tell. Complicated? Yes, brilliantly so and all of this directed with a startling pace and magical talent by Andrew Elliott.

On a very minimal set of a couple of tables and some chairs, and some pure clear clever lighting, actors Keith Launey (Matthew), Liz Mills (Lisa), Leon Contravesprie (Adrian) Angela Papale (Cory) and Staci Robbins (Dr. Frank, a psychologist), demonstrated what real acting is all about. Perfect performances from everyone and a script that is so original and imaginative you've just got to see it. *Private Eyes* should be seen by every theater patron's eyes!

### The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940

In a clever set designed and built by that amazing man of many talents Rene J. F. Piazza, to resemble the library of a home in Chappaqua, NY circa 1940, the small stage of his production company Actor's Theatre of New Orleans did just that. It was a workable and clever concept, well done for a small community theater. A bit of fancy chairs, tables, bookcases that opened and led to hidden passageways, and a rich theater patron who owned the mansion and loved to invest in shows sets the plot. So a meeting has been arranged with several actors, a director with a suspect past, and the grand dame herself to discuss the plans. However things go awry when it is discovered that the director and others assembled were

involved in a show he did in which some serial stabber kept killing off the pretty ladies of the cast. The plot thickens and the audience is treated to a trivial but delightful little mystery well acted and directed by the cast and crew as a tall man all in black, face covered, starts killing off the house guests. Of course the grand dame has a German maid who is as wacky as a blond furred gorilla on LSD (remember this is 1940s Nazi time).

I think my favorite actress was the grand dame played by Starr Mason as Ms. Elsa Von Grossenknueten in an elegant mauveish draped gown, or was that purpleish? And she played it with a sort of Margaret Dumont (from the 3 Stooges) tongue in cheek condescension style. Another favorite was the lyricist of the work in progress, Bernice Roth played by Stephanie Duplechin making her entrance fresh from New York City and dressed to kill in imitation leopard-looking matching hat and outfit, her long red hair draping around anything as she gulped down another and another and another drinkypoo. Jessi Norton as the German maid or was that maids (but don't tell) was a laugh maker with every Wagnerian entrance or scene and that handsome and talented Brian Collins convincingly played the perhaps crazed director, Ken De La Maize.

Now don't think I didn't like or was not impressed by the other good looking fine performers (I wanted to wrap a couple of them up and take them home for the weekend) but space is limited so let me just say that adding greatly to the



Eleanor Bernstein & C. Leonard Raybon in *Li'l Abner*  
(Photo: Michael Palumbo)

Community Church in New Orleans. They meet every Sunday at 5pm at 1333 S. Carrollton Ave. NOLA 70118 [now served by the St. Charles Streetcar again!] – ring or email for details. [pastor@bigeasymcc.com](mailto:pastor@bigeasymcc.com) 504.214.4340, [www.bigeasymcc.com](http://www.bigeasymcc.com).

campy, funny, charm of this show was the very good and crisp work of Tim Bellow as Michael Kelly, Kevin Songy as Patrick O'Reilly, Gina Abromson as Nikki Crandall, Robert Facio as Eddie McCuen, Jan Chatengier as Marjorie

[continued on Main-23]



trodding the boards ...from Main-22

Baverstock and Doug Delcambre as Roger Hopewell. The show had much sparkle and many laughs because of their deliciously good contributions of well honed stagecraft.

Rene' J. F. Piazza directed with a good sense of workable camp and excellent pacing and as mentioned he designed the attractive useful set. Well, there was one secret bookcase that just wouldn't slide well, but it seemed part of the script. If it works, kids, keep it in.

Chelle Ambrose did the period costumes which were quite in keeping with the style of the script. Danielle Hull did the fine sound and lighting, and a whole lot of other people worked long and hard nailing, painting, cleaning and helping to create the big magic of a delightful little show. A show which you should all go and enjoy. This is an ensemble group that keeps getting better and better and their love and dedication to the joy of theatre makes every production glow.

Li'l Abner

The Summer Lyric Theatre at Tulane University seems on a winning streak after its first musical of the season, a mesmerizing, stunning production of Pal Joey. The second production, Panama, Frank, Mercer, and De Paul, a sizable hit on Broadway in the 1960s, was another equally polished and classy show with an added touch of high falouting kick-a-poo-joy-juice technicolor sets and costumes and enough energy to power some Chocolate City for at least a week.

And please remember that The Summer Lyric Theatre at Tulane University has nothing to do or is in no way connected to that psychologically enclosed very private entity, Tulane University I'm told.. SLT only uses some of T.U. buildings and staff and facilities and students and cannot be influenced by those who pontificate over and rule The Tulane University Department of Theater and Dance. Unless, of course they may want to kick someone on the SLT staff off and tell him to hit the bricks. I'm not sure who signs the paychecks. These comments are in response to a query I had regarding other comments in my previous review of Pal Joey which implied some connection or other of this totally separate (and you can tell by the quality of its productions) theatrical company from other things done on campus regarding theater and dance. Questions? I have a lot of answers. 504.361.0943. So now back to the totally unaffiliated production of a wonderful show set amidst that Vatican City of Universities, Tulane U.

Li'l Abner as staged by our own remarkable TSL Artistic Director B. Michael Howard with such a crisp, fresh, joyful well paced vision was, yes, let's say it kids,



Sean Patterson, Gary Rucker & Katie Howe in Li'l Abner (Photo: Michael Palumbo)

# The Krewe of Petronius Presents Dinner and Drag

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awesome. And Director Diane Lala added many a dollop of bright beauty to his work. Rick Paul's set designs looked like they were fresh off the stage of some NYC Broadway designer in appearance, style and finish. Charlotte Lang's costumes would be up for an Oscar if she had done them for a movie version. Peter Pfeil's lighting design was creative and as effective as some of the Kick A Poo Joy Juice alluded to in the show. His lighting concept gave the whole show such a sunny kick of color and content we all got happy. Conductor/Musical Director Kenneth L. Leach got a Carnegie Hall performance of a whole lot of polished pure sound and harmony from the orchestra, and Don & Linda Galled brought that old Al Camp cartoon to life with such authentic wigs and makeup.

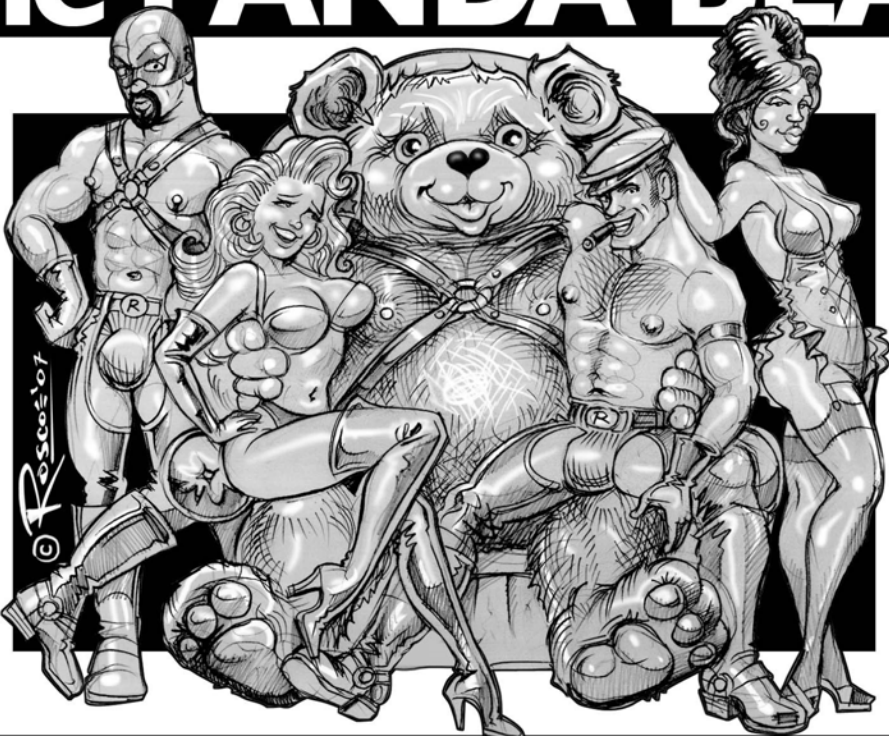
The performers were quite simply Camp character brought to life on stage. C. Leonard Raybon was a handsome charming Li'l Abner, although he had enough eye liner to be silent film star Rudolph Valentino's understudy. He has a beautiful voice, he's

multi talented and was a perfect cast for this role. Daisey Mae played by Eleanor Bernstein was lovely and full of energy. Wayne Daigrepont was a perfect Marryin' Sam but it was Jorinda Junius who stole the show as Mammy Yokum. What a thrilling and well conceived performance. Mat Grau, III, as Pappy Yokum was excellent as her partner. Gary Rucker in that lime green zoot suit was a marvelous and creative and unforgettable Evil Eye Fleagle. Robert Pavlovich as Earthquake McGoon was both funny and wonderful in the role.

[continued on Main-27]

# The PANDA BEAR

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Lords of Leather President Gary Vandeventer wins Leather Person of the Year



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New Orleans' Elizabeth Bouvier & Baton Rouge's Nicole Foxx tied for Entertainer of the Year



MC Savanna & Lesbian of the Year Marty Curtin



Marsha presents the Marsha Delain Award of Excellence (Drag Ambassador Award) to Rhonda Roget



SDGM Tittie Toulouse & Electra City accept GLBT Business of the Year for Queen Fashions



Cowpokes won Show Bar of the Year



MC Savanna presents Dance Bar of the Year to Tim Pflueger



Fly Fashion Glamour Award went to Queen Amon Ra Opal Masters



Jay Verona accepts Restaurant/Deli of the Year for Quartermaster: The Nellie Deli



Lance Pippin won Bartender of the Year



Manager Red & Brian Wentz accept Leather Bar of the Year for the Phoenix



SDGM Paloma accepts Fly Fashion Victim Award for Pat McCardle



MC Savanna presents Buzzy Fanning AIDS Award to Quentin Little for Baton Rouge's Greg T. Bell AIDS Foundation



MC Savanna DeLorean & Gay Man of the Year Ken Grandpre



MC Savanna & DJ of the Year Richie Rich



The Cheridon Comedy Award went to Eva Las Vegas



Hyacinth Bucket accepts Neighborhood Bar of the Year for Cowpokes





Nicole Foxx accepts Bitch of the Year for Baton Rouge's Mia Bonet



President Safonda Peters, Capt. Amon Ra XLIII Randall Brown and Queen & King Amon Ra XLIII Opal Masters & Paul Davis accept Gay Carnival Ball of the Year for Krewe of Amon Ra



Guest MC Savanna DeLorean & GAA Board's Lisa Beaumann



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Top 5 Show Bar of the Year Finalist Cowpokes



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Donnie Jay's VIP Table



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Jeff Palmquist's VIP Table