

TEN CHIMNEYS

By Jeffrey Hatcher • Directed by Joseph Hanreddy



Study
Guide

TEN CHIMNEYS

PlayGuide written and compiled by
Leda Hoffmann
Education Coordinator,
with contributions from the
Ten Chimneys Foundation.

PlayGuide edited by
Jenny Kostreva
Education Director

Neal Easterling
Education Assistant

Lisa Fulton
Marketing Director

Brent Hazelton
Associate Artistic Director

Graphic Design by
Megan Gadiant



Tickets: 414-224-9490
www.MilwaukeeRep.com

Mark Clements
Artistic Director

Dawn Helsing Wolters
Managing Director

MILWAUKEE REPERTORY THEATER
108 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI • 53202

TEN CHIMNEYS SYNOPSIS

The greats of American Theater come to life in this funny, fictionalized play honoring the real-life renowned acting team of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, and a rehearsal of a production of Chekhov's *The Seagull* at their legendary Wisconsin Estate, Ten Chimneys, in the 1930s. Surrounded by actors, family and hangers-on, the play takes a turn for the dramatic when a young actress named Uta Hagen arrives and a romantic triangle begins to mirror the events in Chekhov's play about passion and art. The result is a sweet, sad, funny and revealing look at the private lives of these very public artists.

Ten Chimneys was commissioned by the Arizona Theatre Company and premiered there in January 2011.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 3: A letter from Sean Malone – President, Ten Chimneys Foundation

Page 4-5: The Place

Page 6-7: The People

Page 8-9: The Play

Page 10: Alfred Lunt & Lynn Fontanne: Theatrical Realism

Page 11: The Rep's Production Design

Page 12: Discussion Questions

Page 13: Visiting The Rep



(Lunts in Dining Room): Warren O'Brien from the O'Brien Family Collection at WHS (c)Ten Chimneys Foundation.



TEN CHIMNEYS: INTIMATE, REJUVENATING & INSPIRATIONAL by Sean Malone – President, Ten Chimneys Foundation



Ten Chimneys Estate in Genesee Depot, Wisconsin.

Carol Channing once said, “There is a certain feeling for actors, or anyone in the theatre, that if you got to go to Ten Chimneys, you must have done something right.”

For decades, the best of the best of American theatre journeyed repeatedly to Ten Chimneys – the National Historic Landmark estate of theatre legends Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne.

For close friends like Noël Coward, Helen Hayes, Vivian Leigh or Larry Olivier, Ten Chimneys was “home.” For new friends and younger actors like Julie Harris, Monty

(Clift), or Dickie Van Patten, Ten Chimneys was a validation that they “must have done something right.”

One of the many delightful things about Jeffrey Hatcher’s play, *Ten Chimneys*, is that it captures both categories of frequent Ten Chimneys guests. Sydney Greenstreet is the old friend, coming home. And a teenaged Uta Hagen is the talented, star-struck devotee.

Ten Chimneys, the play, is fiction – not history. It’s wonderful storytelling and a reimagining of those summers in Wisconsin. The Lunts’ actual summer retreats to Ten Chimneys were filled with lingering dinners, long swims, leisurely strolls, horseback rides, and breakfasts in bed. But watching Helen Hayes relax on stage for two hours wouldn’t be very interesting. Instead, Jeffrey’s play starts with a real (very famous) place and real (very famous) people – and then asks the audience, “What if . . . ?” The plot twists are more Chekhov than history, but the beguiling spirit of Ten Chimneys is absolutely there.

Another lovely thing about Jeffrey’s play is how it subtly conveys the role that Ten Chimneys played in American theatre. It was the Golden Age of theatre, and Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne were inarguably the king and queen of the American stage. The Lunts wrote it into their contracts that they would never act in the summer, so that they could come home to the estate to retreat, relax and rejuvenate. As the fall premiere of a new play on Broadway neared, writers, designers and key fellow actors would come to Ten Chimneys to rehearse and explore. (In *Ten Chimneys*, the Lunts are welcoming actors to rehearse for their production of *The Seagull* – which was the Broadway premiere of Chekhov’s masterpiece.) As a result, for much of the 20th century, Ten Chimneys was the center of the theatrical universe.

And, the estate itself is like a stage set. The Lunts created each room (and each view), as if it were a stage set; furnishings, antiques, mementos, trees, outbuildings – everything was put in the perfect place to create the perfect effect. And, like a stage set, when it was done, it was done. And it’s all still there just as the Lunts created it, and now fully restored.

Ten Chimneys is intimate, rejuvenating, and inspirational – as much so today as it was in the 1930s and ’40s – and it remains a place for people and inspiration. Everyone involved with Ten Chimneys Foundation is passionately focused on the future – on the profound impact we can make with our programs for the public and for American theatre. Our programs draw from, and depend on, the extraordinary artistic retreat created by Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne.

When managing a historic site, it’s tempting (for all the right reasons), to tuck everything away and rope everything off. Ten Chimneys Foundation is deeply committed to striking the balance between preservation and access. When Ten Chimneys’ founding staff members, volunteers, and donors first stepped into the Drawing Room of the Main House or the one-room log-cabin Studio (where *Ten Chimneys* is set), we knew that the full experience of these spaces could be transformative, for the public and for American theatre. We have always felt that guests should experience Ten Chimneys as if they were a guest of the Lunts in their home – no ropes, nothing behind glass. It’s a different approach that we feel sets the stage for inspiration.

Just look at what playwright Jeffrey Hatcher was inspired to do.

I hope Ten Chimneys (the place and the play), inspires YOU this season.

Sean Malone

President, Ten Chimneys Foundation
smalone@tenchimneys.org



Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne with Noël Coward at Ten Chimneys. Warren O’Brien, (c) Ten Chimneys Foundation.

THE PLACE

TEN CHIMNEYS - THE ESTATE

Alfred Lunt grew up in Milwaukee and spent time with his family picnicking in Genesee Depot. When Alfred inherited money from his father as a young man, he bought land in Genesee Depot and designed and constructed a house for his mother and family. Alfred loved the Wisconsin countryside and the estate was a retreat for Alfred and later for his wife, Lynn Fontanne. For most of their careers, the Lunts spent every summer at their Genesee Depot estate relaxing, rehearsing and entertaining the biggest and brightest stars of the American theater.



YES, THERE ARE TEN CHIMNEYS!

MAIN HOUSE • 6 CHIMNEYS

The Main House was personally designed by Alfred and originally used as a home for his mother and step-siblings. Alfred and Lynn moved into the main house in 1932. It has eighteen rooms: the Entry Hall, Garden Room, Flirtation Room, Drawing Room, Library, Belasco Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, Helen Hayes Bedroom, Laurence Olivier Bedroom, Noël Coward Bedroom, Master Bedroom, Lynn's Dressing Room and Lynn's Sewing Room.

Alfred and Lynn didn't officially name the estate "Ten Chimneys" until 1943.



THE PLACE

COTTAGE • 3 CHIMNEYS

The Lunts originally converted the chicken-coop into a five-room country-style cottage for Lynn and Alfred to stay in when they weren't performing. Eventually, Alfred and Lynn moved into the main house and the cottage became the home for Alfred's mother and sister.



(Cottage): (c) Ten Chimneys Foundation.

STUDIO • 1 CHIMNEY

The Swedish-style log cabin was erected as an artistic studio for writing and rehearsing.



(Studio): (c) Ten Chimneys Foundation.

Other buildings include the pool and pool house, a creamery, a greenhouse, barns and stables.

For information on visiting
Ten Chimneys, see
www.tenchimneys.org
or call 212-968-4110.



(Pool house): (c) Ten Chimneys Foundation.

VISITING TEN CHIMNEYS TODAY

Ten Chimneys is open to the public for tours and serves as an artistic home for theater artists. The Ten Chimneys Foundation offers small group tours Tuesday through Saturday, from May through November.

THE PEOPLE

CHARACTERS



Alfred Lunt – Broadway actor, married to Lynn Fontanne
Grant Goodman



Lynn Fontanne – Broadway actress, married to Alfred Lunt
Wendi Weber



Uta Hagen – Young actress in Alfred and Lynn's company
Leah Karpel



Hattie Sederholm – Alfred's mother, lives at Ten Chimneys
Linda Stephens



Sydney Greenstreet – Member of Alfred and Lynn's company
Bob Breuler



Carl Sederholm – Alfred's half-brother, lives at Ten Chimneys
Nick Harazin



Louise Greene – Alfred's half-sister, lives near Ten Chimneys
Jenny McKnight

The Actors employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

ALFRED LUNT AND LYNN FONTANNE

"Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne were universally regarded as the greatest acting team in the history of the English speaking theatre. They were married for 55 years and were inseparable both on and off the stage." So reads the epitaph on the graves of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, the couple whose stage performances delighted generations of theatregoers in the early and middle twentieth century. While the Lunts are considered theatre royalty because they were determined to make their career in theatre rather than film, their legacy is preserved not on celluloid, but in the minds of those fortunate enough to have seen them perform live.



Alfred Lunt was born in 1892 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His father's death when Alfred was only two years old led to a very close relationship between him and his mother, Hattie (who eventually remarried and had another son and two daughters). Alfred said from the time he was four years old that he knew he wanted to be an actor. He attended school at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin, where he began performing with The Carroll Players. He transferred to Emerson College in Boston, but he quickly left school in favor of working on the stage. He eventually became a member of George C. Tyler's acting company in New York and in 1919 appeared in the production for which he was soon well-known, playing the title character in *Clarence*. That same year Alfred appeared in a production of *Made of Money*, acting for the first time with Lynn Fontanne.

Lynn Fontanne was born in Essex, England, in 1887. When she was ten years old, she attended a performance of a country play in Woodford and decided then and there that she wanted to be an actor. At the age of 15, she asked a family friend to write her a letter of introduction to legendary actress Ellen Terry so that she could audition to be her student. She was given lessons by Ms. Terry and soon thereafter began her professional career on the stage. Though she received generally good notices early in her career, it was not until she was mentored by Laurette Taylor, a leading actor on the Broadway stage, that she began to blossom into a leading lady. In 1921, Lynn got her big break when she appeared in *Dulcy*, playing the scatterbrained heroine beloved by critics and audiences alike.



Warren O'Brien,
(c) Ten Chimneys
Foundation.

1887

Lynn Fontanne born in England

1895

Chekhov writes *The Seagull*

1909

First production of *The Seagull* in English translation at the Royalty Theatre, Glasgow

1915

Alfred builds first portion of main house

1922

Alfred and Lynn marry

1892

Alfred Lunt born in Milwaukee, WI

1898

Stanislavski directs *The Seagull* at The Moscow Art Theatre

1914

Alfred buys land in Genesee Depot

1916

First published English language translation of *The Seagull* in the United States, performed in New York by the Washington Square Players

“The Lunts were magic, and I have never, never found anyone quite like them again.”

- Julie Harris

By the time of Alfred and Lynn's marriage in 1922, both had experienced theatrical successes. They each continued to pursue their respective careers and became two of the highest paid theatrical performers of their day. However, in 1924, they took a huge professional leap by joining The Theatre Guild, a young company producing avant-garde work by authors like Henrik Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw. Both stars took a sizeable pay cut to work with The Theatre Guild, but they also included two stipulations in their contracts. First, they were only to appear in plays together, never in separate productions. Second, they would not perform in the summer but would, instead, use the warm months to retire to their home Ten Chimneys, in Genesee Depot, Wisconsin.



Alfred and Lynn at Ten Chimneys. Warren O'Brien, (c) Ten Chimneys Foundation.

Throughout their lifetime, the Lunts performed on Broadway and toured all over the United States as well as throughout Europe. Some of their famous productions include *Caprice*, *Reunion in Vienna*, *Design for Living*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Idiot's Delight*, *Amphitryon 38*, *There Shall Be No Night* and *The Visit*, among others. Because of their overwhelming stage popularity, movie studios of the day were desperate to sign the Lunts to their roster of stars. They were offered extravagant sums of money and yet they remained steadfast in their devotion to the theatre. As Lynn was famously reported to have told one studio executive after the couple received an offer of \$1,000,000 for a two-film deal, "My dear sir, we can be bought, but we cannot be bored." Their single film *The Guardsman*, stands as a reminder of their talent, expressiveness and inescapable charisma that was experienced by so many people.

In 1958, the Lunts received the honor of having a theatre on Broadway named after them: the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre. The Lunts retired from the stage in 1960 and lived an idyllic life at Ten Chimneys until Alfred's death in 1977 and Lynn's death in 1983.

SYDNEY GREENSTREET



Sydney Greenstreet was born in Sandwich, England in 1879. At the age of 18 he travelled to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), to become a tea planter. When drought destroyed his business plans, Greenstreet returned to England and began taking evening acting classes. He made his stage debut in 1902 as a murderer in *Sherlock Holmes* and by 1905 he was on Broadway. Greenstreet played many roles on either side of the Atlantic ranging from musical theater to Shakespeare. He spent most of the 1930s working with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne at the Theatre Guild. Roles opposite the Lunts include Sorin in *The Seagull* and Baptista in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Greenstreet refused film offers until age 62 but then had a successful (if short), film career. His films include *The Maltese Falcon*, *The Woman in White* and *Casablanca*.

UTA HAGEN

One of America's great acting teachers, Uta Hagen was also a Tony-Award winning actress who starred in 22 Broadway productions. Born in Germany in 1919, Hagen's family immigrated to the United States in 1924. She was raised in Madison, Wisconsin, and spent a semester at the University of Wisconsin before moving to New York City. Her professional debut came as Ophelia opposite Eva Le Gallienne in *Hamlet*. At just 18, she made her Broadway debut as Nina in *The Seagull* with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. She went on to play many leading Broadway roles including Desdemona in *Othello* with Paul Robeson and originating the role of Martha in Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*.



Uta Hagen was an accomplished actress, but her true passion was teaching the next generation of actors. She joined HB Studios in 1947 and married co-founder Herbert Berghof ten years later. As a master teacher at HB Studios, Hagen trained actors such as Al Pacino, Sigourney Weaver, Liza Minnelli, Jack Lemmon and Matthew Broderick. Her books *Respect for Acting* and *A Challenge for the Actor* are still used in university acting classes today.

1922-23

Main house remodeled and chicken coop converted into cottage

1932

Lynn and Alfred move into the main house, build the studio

1938

Lynn and Alfred star in *The Seagull* on Broadway

1958

Lunt-Fontanne Theatre dedicated

1977

Alfred dies, age 84

1924

Alfred and Lynn join The Theatre Guild. Their contract gives them summers off to spend at Ten Chimneys

1933

Swimming pool added to estate

1943

The Lunts' Genesee Depot estate is formally named "Ten Chimneys"

1960

Lynn and Alfred retire from the theater

1983

Lynn dies, age 95

THE PLAY

The Seagull

Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne starred in the 1938 Broadway production of *The Seagull* at the Shubert Theatre. It was the historical fact of Alfred and Lynn rehearsing *The Seagull* at their Genesee Depot estate with a young Uta Hagen and Sydney Greenstreet that inspired Ten Chimneys playwright Jeffrey Hatcher. The plot of *Ten Chimneys* mirrors the events of *The Seagull*. The plot is mostly fiction but based on actual meetings of these characters.



Alfred and Lynn in *The Seagull*. (c) Ten Chimneys Foundation.

The Seagull SYNOPSIS

ACT I

The Seagull is set in Sorin's large country estate where the famous actress, Arkadina, and her lover, the novelist Trigorin, are visiting. The play begins as everyone is awaiting the rehearsal of a play. Medvendenko says, "Why do you always wear black?" Masha replies, "I'm in mourning for my life." The schoolteacher Medvendenko loves Masha but she cannot love him back because she is in love with Arkadina's son, the playwright Treplev. Trigorin has fallen in love with Nina, the young actress, and Arkadina knows it. Treplev is oblivious to Masha's love because he is in love with Nina. Nina and Treplev talk and they kiss but Nina does not return Treplev's affection.

ACT II

A few days later, Treplev brings Nina a seagull he has shot and killed in a desperate attempt to show his affection. Nina greets him less than enthusiastically, and he leaves saying he will kill himself as Trigorin enters. Nina admires Trigorin and tells him "your life is beautiful" and that she wants to be famous.

ACT III

Two weeks later, the audience discovers that Treplev has tried to kill himself and now challenges Trigorin to a duel, but his mother Arkadina persuades him to call it off. As Treplev exits, Trigorin enters. Arkadina begs him not to leave her and he agrees. However, when Nina arrives and tells Trigorin she is going to Moscow to become an actress, he secretly gives her the name of his hotel. They agree to meet in Moscow and share a prolonged kiss.

ACT IV

Two years later, Masha is now married to Medvenko but still loves Treplev. Nina and Trigorin's love affair has soured. Nina became pregnant but the child died and Trigorin lost interest and returned to Arkadina. Nina returns to the estate, a shell of her former self. Treplev tries to convince her to be with him but she refuses. Treplev tears up his manuscripts and exits. Arkadina, Trigorin, and others enter the study and hear a gunshot offstage. Dorn, the doctor, tells Arkadina that it was just a burst bottle but tells Trigorin "Take Arkadina somewhere away from here. The fact is Treplev has killed himself."



Stanislavski as Trigorin with Nina in the Moscow Art Theatre production.

Characters in *The Seagull*

Nina Mikhailovna Zarechnaya
a young actress played by Uta Hagen

Irina Nikolayevna Arkadina
a fading actress played by
Lynn Fontanne

Boris Alexeyevich Trigorin
a novelist played by Alfred Lunt

Pjotr Nikolayevich Sorin
Arkadina's brother, owner of the
estate, played by Sydney Greenstreet

Konstantin Gavrilovich Treplev
Arkadina's son, a playwright

Ilya Afanasyevich Shamrayev
Manager of Sorin's estate

Masha
Ilya and Polina's daughter

ANTON CHEKHOV

Anton Chekhov is considered the greatest Russian dramatist of modern times. Born in 1860 in Taganrog, a small port town in Russia off the Sea of Azov, Chekhov moved to Moscow at the age of 19 to attend medical school. While at school, Chekhov wrote humorous stories and sketches to support his family. Upon graduation, Chekhov worked as a freelance journalist and writer of comic sketches. Chekhov won the Pushkin Prize in 1887 for his short stories. In 1887, a theater manager commissioned Chekhov to write *Ivanov*. Chekhov continued writing for the theater and completed *The Seagull* in 1894. The premiere of *The Seagull* was a disaster. Audiences expected to see a comedy and disrupted the play to the point that the actors became inaudible. Chekhov left the theater and vowed to never write another play. However, the play was revived at the Moscow Art Theatre in a production directed by Constantin Stanislavski in 1898. *The Seagull* was a huge success and while Chekhov never really liked the style of Stanislavski's productions of his work (they were too tragic when Chekhov thought *The Seagull* was a comedy), the successful production revived Chekhov's interest in theater. The Moscow Art Theatre would continue to produce Chekhov's plays, staging *Uncle Vanya* in 1899, *Three Sisters* in 1901, and *The Cherry Orchard* in 1904. Six months after the Moscow Art Theatre's production of *The Cherry Orchard*, Chekhov died at the age of 44 from tuberculosis.



Anton Chekhov.



Moscow Art Theater read *The Seagull* in the spring of 1898.

“Chekhov’s *The Seagull* has a whole variety of romances – people are in love with people who aren’t in love with them. So in Jeff’s play, art mirrors life, life mirrors art, and the relationships of the people playing the parts somewhat mirror the parts that they’re playing.”

-Joe Hanreddy, Director of *Ten Chimneys*

“Same as it always is in Chekhov. All the wrong people in love with all the wrong people.”

– Sydney Greenstreet, *Ten Chimneys*

UNREQUITED LOVE IN *The Seagull*

Arkadina and Trigorin are lovers but Nina loves Trigorin and he becomes infatuated with her.

Medvenko loves Masha but Masha loves Treplev. Treplev loves Nina but his love is unrequited.

ALFRED LUNT & LYNN FONTANNE:

THEATRICAL REALISM

In the vaudeville acts and melodramas of the nineteenth century, declamatory speaking styles and broad sweeping gestures were the norm. Sarah Bernhardt and George M. Cohan captivated audiences with their emotional range and enthusiastic performances. To a modern audience, these performances would seem over-the-top.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, playwrights in Europe began to experiment with realism. Plays like Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and August Strindberg's *Miss Julie* told stories of regular people to be performed on realistic sets. As these plays ushered in a new form of drama, actors' focus on speaking style and gesture shifted to a focus on the emotional life of the characters.

Chekhov mastered this style and wrote characters with deep, unspoken subtext. In seminal productions, Constantin Stanislavski's productions of Chekhov plays showcased a new writing and acting style. In his work on these productions and others, Stanislavski developed realistic acting techniques such as acting "as if" the actor were the character and finding characters' motivations and objectives.



Alfred and Lynn in *The Taming of the Shrew*. (c) Ten Chimneys Foundation.

At the beginnings of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne's careers, Stanislavski's teachings were not common in American and British theater. Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne embraced the style of overtly theatrical 19th century productions. Unabashedly utilizing star-vehicles and making grand entrances, the Lunts were famed for detailed theatrical performances in which they perfected each gesture, each prop. Within this theatricality, the Lunts strove to make their performances as realistic as possible. The Lunts pioneered techniques, such as overlapping dialogue and turning their backs to the audience, that made their performances more realistic.

Acting teachers, such as Lee Strasberg and Stella Adler, brought Stanislavski's system to America and advocated a new acting style based on emotional memory and the inner life of characters. Lee Strasberg is credited with creating this American "Method". Despite generational and stylistic differences, the Lunts respected the young Method actors they worked with but became frustrated with their technical skills. Alfred Lunt believed in finding the inner truth of the character but not at the loss of everything else.

"Life as it's lived with costumes and lights and a thousand people watching!"

- Lynn Fontanne, *Ten Chimneys*

Throughout their career, Alfred and Lynn found a balance between theatricality and realism. They knew their audiences wanted entertainment and truth. When actors in one of the Lunts' last plays, *The Visit*, asked Lee Strasberg about the Lunts, he replied, "The Lunts are the Method."

Uta Hagen, seen in *Ten Chimneys* as a young actress, played her first Broadway role in Chekhov's *The Seagull* opposite Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. She would become one of America's great acting teachers, advocating techniques

related to Stanislavski and the Method. Perhaps she initially learned to connect with the emotional life of a character from Alfred Lunt.

In *Ten Chimneys*, Jeffrey Hatcher captures the theatrical lives of Alfred and Lynn while showcasing their devotion to mastering realistic portrayals of Chekhov's characters. Watch as the Lunts stand on the cusp of the move in theater from overtly theatrical to realistic acting. Two of the last great stars, Alfred and Lynn's determination to truthfully embody their characters laid the foundation for actors to follow.

THE REP'S PRODUCTION DESIGN

REMARKS FROM THE DIRECTOR



Joseph Hanreddy, director of *Ten Chimneys*.

I was very happy when Mark Clements invited me to direct *Ten Chimneys*. I have been a regular visitor to the Lunt's estate in Genesee Depot over the years and very familiar with their theatrical legacy. The acting of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne was a tremendous influence on the American theater and changed the acting style of declamatory and melodramatic bombast that was prevalent in the early days of their careers towards a more naturalistic and nuanced approach. I am not old enough to have seen them perform, but virtually all of my teachers did and the Lunts were constantly held up to us as paragons of excellence. They had tremendous work ethics and were artistic perfectionists whose creativity and passionately truthful performances highlighted a golden era of American stage acting. Their entire lives centered on their life in the theater. Their homes were theatrical sets, their parties were stage shows and everyone who socialized with them was turned into audience. They rehearsed constantly - no matter how long the run of the play, they always felt that some tiny bit of business could be improved or some small new discovery could be made. The seeming contradiction that always stuck with me is how many hours of rehearsal it takes to create a believably spontaneous event on the stage.

Ten Chimneys celebrates the Lunts, their era and their Wisconsin connection, but the play would be as appealing if the characters were made up. Jeff Hatcher's play about the Lunts rehearsing Anton Chekhov's play *The Seagull* at their summer home in Genesee Depot, Wisconsin, with other famous theater personages Sydney Greenstreet and Uta Hagen, is a wonderfully creative premise. *The Seagull* is one of the greatest plays ever written, and it is subtly and carefully nuanced characters make it one of the most challenging plays for actors to perform. Jeff has layered in wonderfully theatrical and fun resonances between the life of the Lunts and the characters they are rehearsing. *Ten Chimneys* goes beyond a celebration of theater history to provide a captivating and very funny story about art and artists, the creative process and the complex dynamics of marriage and family.



Costume rendering and set model for The Rep's production of *Ten Chimneys*.

DESIGN TEAM

SET DESIGN - Linda Buchanan

COSTUME DESIGN - Rachel Healy

LIGHTING DESIGN - Thomas C. Hase

SOUND DESIGN - Barry Funderburg

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The director of the Arizona premiere, David Ira Goldstein, said of the play: “Two of the great themes of the play are making a family and making a home. Jeffrey has chosen to title the play *Ten Chimneys* not Alfred and Lynn or The Lunts. One of the real motors of the play is the question, what does it mean to have a home? Where do you make your home, particularly if you’re an itinerant person?” What is your own definition of a home?

Alfred and Lynn strove to create a theater family with their company of actors. How are Alfred’s biological and theatrical families different or similar in this play? Do you think that Alfred and Lynn succeeded in creating a theatrical family?

Family encompasses more than just biological families in this play. What are the communities that you would consider families in your life?

The Lunts performed together after they were married. Alfred tells Uta that she wouldn’t know that Sydney was upset unless she had “played with him a long time. Known him, I mean.” The Rep has a resident acting company, many of whom have worked together for years. What are the benefits of having actors that have worked together for years on stage together?

Playwright Jeffrey Hatcher refers to many supporting characters’ personal battles in the play. What hardships do Sydney, Uta, Louise and Carl encounter in their lives? How do they work through them?



Lunts in front of Lunt-Fontanne Theatre with Helen Hayes (c) Ten Chimneys Foundation.

FURTHER RESEARCH

EXPLORE

> TEN CHIMNEYS FOUNDATION WEBSITE

www.TenChimneys.org

Information on the estate, the Lunts and visiting today.

> ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY BLOG

www.arizonatheatre.org/inside-atc/preview/no.-2-winter-2011/show-related/140/1381/

An account of rehearsals for the premiere of *Ten Chimneys* at Arizona Theatre Company.

WATCH

> Find clips of Uta Hagen’s acting class on YouTube

> Rent a version of *The Seagull*

> Watch the Lunts only film, *The Guardsman*.

READ

> *The Seagull*

Chekhov, Anton. Trans. Stark Young.

New York: Samuel French, 1950.

The Lunts used the Stark Young translation.

> *Respect for Acting*

Hagen, Uta

New York: Wiley Publishing, 1973.

> *Challenge for the Actor*

Hagen, Uta

New York: Scribner, 1991.

Uta Hagen’s acting books, written later in her life.

> *The Fabulous Lunts*

Jared Brown

Atheneum, 1986, reissued AuthorHouse, 2005

A biography of Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne

VISITING THE REP

Milwaukee Repertory Theater is located in the Milwaukee Center at the corner of Wells and Water Streets, in the heart of downtown. The building was formerly the home of the Electric Railway and Light Company. This name is still carved on the wall outside.

The Rep's Ticket Office is located on the first floor on the southwest side of the Milwaukee Center. Other businesses that share this building include Associated Bank, an office tower, the Pabst Theater and the Intercontinental Hotel. Center of the first floor is a large staircase which leads to The Rep Quadracci Powerhouse theater and lobby.

Inside the lobby are restrooms, concessions, water fountains and a coat check. Most plays have one intermission that is about 20 minutes long. There will be a sign in the lobby with the full running time of the play.



Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Photo by Michael Brosilow.

CONTACT US: We love hearing your responses to productions at The Rep!

WRITE US:

Milwaukee Repertory Theater
Education Department
108 East Wells St. • Milwaukee, WI 53202

CONNECT WITH US ONLINE:

 www.facebook.com/MilwRep  twitter.com/MilwRep • www.MilwaukeeRep.com

FOR QUESTIONS OR TO SCHEDULE A CLASSROOM WORKSHOP, PLEASE CONTACT:

Jenny Kostreva
Education Director
414-290-5370
jkostreva@milwaukeeerep.com

Leda Hoffmann
Education Coordinator
414-290-5393
lhoffmann@milwaukeeerep.com

Neal Easterling
Education Assistant
414-290-5398
neasterling@milwaukeeerep.com

PROGRAMS IN THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT RECEIVE GENEROUS FUNDING FROM:

The Einhorn Family Foundation
Greater Milwaukee Foundation
The Gardner Foundation
The Harley-Davidson Foundation
Helen Bader Foundation

Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation
Johnson Controls Foundation
Marshall & Ilsley Foundation
Milwaukee Arts Board
MPS Partnership for the Arts

Northwestern Mutual Foundation
Park Bank
The Richard and Ethel Herzfeld Foundation
Target
WE Energies