

# **THE STACY PLAY – A LOVE SONG – VOLUME I**

## **By Anne Hamilton**

A Staged Reading Featuring

Soraya Broukhim\* as Stacy Lee Madison  
Brent Wellington Barker III as Jonathan

Curated and Directed by Anne Hamilton  
Costume Designer – Jessa-Raye Court  
Stage Manager – Benjamin Rodman  
Dramaturg – Walter Byongsok Chon  
Audience Assistants – Cate Cammarata and Haley Ward

Time: 2pm and 5:30pm  
Location: The Mall/Literary Walk and Bethesda Terrace  
Central Park, New York City

\*This Actor is appearing courtesy of Actors' Equity Association

Equity Approved Showcase



The 2pm staged reading is an official event of the League of Professional Theatre Women's 30 Anniversary Celebration. "30 Plays in 30 Years"  
Curated by Anne Hamilton

## Cast of Characters

STACY LEE MADISON/Soul Identity #26,589  
JONATHAN/Soul Identity #448,921

Soraya Broukhim\*  
Brent Wellington Barker III

\*\*This Actor is appearing courtesy of Actors' Equity Association

### ACT ONE

PART I – YOU ARE HERE. Location: Paradise, Time: 2077

PART II – AND THEN I WENT INSIDE. Location: The Upper West Side. Time: 2009

PART III – THE CODE OF LIFE, Location: Nervi, Italy. Time: 2077. FLASHBACK to the  
Emergency Room, 2009.

### INTERMISSION

### ACT TWO

PART IV – NO MARGIN FOR ERROR. Location: The Upper West Side. Time: 2011.

PART V – NEVER MIX THE TWO. Location: The Upper West Side. Time: 2011.

PART VI – SUMMER STORM. Location: The Womb. Time: 2077.

### INTERMISSION

### ACT THREE

PART VII B – M.R.L., A WOMAN FIRST. Location: A Lecture Hall. Time: 2011.

PART VIII – AND HERE WE ARE. Location: The Womb. Time: 2077.

## Director's Notes

You are part of a wonderful experiment today, where I am trying out the walking tour version of THE STACY PLAY in a staged reading. I wanted to create a modern pageant play where Stacy takes the audience along on a journey through her own soul as she reaches salvation through commitment to her own life force and creativity. I chose Literary Walk (also known as The Mall) in Central Park, because it is an outdoor cathedral of American elms, and leads to the Bethesda Fountain, a symbol of healing. I hope to someday stage a fully-realized production here, featuring a pageant cart that Stacy wheels from location to location, with the audience following.

This is how I came to this place and this work of art. In 1979, my best friend Curtis Nurnberger was killed in a car accident. I sensed that my life was frozen in some ways for many years due to the shock and loss. I wanted to process the remains of my grief and move on with my life. When the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death came three years ago, I set out on “a journey of the soul” to revisit the trauma and unfreeze some emotions that I knew were petrified.

So I got in touch with his parents – for the first time since his funeral - visited his gravesite, and even found and talked to my boyfriend at the time, who had been driving the car when Curtis was killed. As I began to process my emotion, I understood something very clear about my relationship with him, and it became the line that this whole play was developed from: “I just realized I’ve been in love with a dead man for thirty years”.

Yes, he was a dead man. And I was still alive. How was I going to regain my life force and emotional fluidity? And how was I going to make these things grow? The answer was by writing. I wrote AND THEN I WENT INSIDE, which by a stroke of good fortune for me, Kathleen Chalfant played in 2009 at a League of Professional Theatre Women new play festival at the Cherry Lane Theatre. The producer asked Kathleen and she simply said yes. And Kathleen was mesmerizing as Stacy. She liked the role very much and encouraged me to write more about Stacy’s life, particularly her life apart from Jonathan.

So it didn’t take me long to write the rest of the play. It came out in episodes. Each piece can be played on its own, and together it portrays the very singular life of Stacy, an artist and poet. She reunites with Jonathan in Paradise, Limbo, and the Womb. In that order.

As I processed my memories of Curtis and wrote more and more, some deep-seated beliefs started developing and appearing in the script. That souls reincarnate together. That we retain consciousness after death. And that we can be reborn together again, even if our souls have had a tragic interaction in this lifetime. And I started to have hope. I began to believe that consciousness creates the reality that we’re living in. Stacy is lucky. She heals because she is given a glimpse of the future, and a promise of hope, through an otherworldly interaction with Jonathan.

I haven’t had this gift in my own life. I’ve had to develop my life and art by blind faith. I want to give hope to others by dramatizing the reality behind the scenes of our own consciousness. And I want to say that, when it comes to grieving, or just simply living and moving forward, I am with those who listen to or read THE STACY PLAY. My consciousness is with you. I am still making art, just like Stacy, boldly and like my life depends on it. Because I feel that it does. My life is my art and my art is my life. And as long as I keep moving forward, I can gain my own salvation.

As we walk together on this journey today, I hope that you will experience healing and understanding. And then that you will turn and give that gift to someone else as well.

## Dramaturg's Notes

### By Walter Byongsok Chon

Anne Hamilton's *THE STACY PLAY* reveals the spiritual journey of Stacy as she comes to terms with the untimely death of her high school love interest, her struggle to survive her traumas and her development as an artist. The play presents a landscape with many "stations" in Stacy's life, resembling a medieval pageant play, a form of theatre performed in Medieval England.

The so-called "pageants" were performed on moveable stages or wagons (called pageants) that stopped at specified places (stations) along a designated route to perform individual episodes of a complex play, usually telling the story of all of creation history from before the beginning of time to the final judgment. These plays were called "cycles" and were performed on religious occasions such as the Feast of Corpus Christi (May 23 – June 4, 1311), celebrating the union of the human and divine in the person of Christ and the promise of redemption through his sacrifice.

Pageants were assigned to individual trade guilds, which were responsible for producing and performing the assigned pageant. For example, in the 48 episodes of the York Cycle, the Shipwrights guild was assigned to "Building of the Ark", the Carpenters guild to the "Resurrection," etc. The whole cycle was performed over the course of a single day. As a pageant finished, that wagon moved on to the next station and the next wagon advanced to perform the next episode in the cycle at the vacated station.

Though pageants were distinctly medieval in their functions, modern playwrights such as August Strindberg adapted the form to physicalize the spiritual journey of a modern man. For example, in his play *TO DAMASCUS*, the protagonist goes through several "stations" of personal traumas in order to reach enlightenment.

### The Mall/Literary Walk

When the Park was designed 150 years ago, the Mall was a place for park visitors to parade in their Sunday best. The Mall is the only straight line in the Park and is Central Park's most important horticultural feature. The main attractions are the American elm trees. They form a cathedral-like canopy above the Park's widest pedestrian pathway. These elms are one of the largest and last remaining stands in North America, and one of the Parks most photographed areas.

### The Bethesda Fountain

Rising from Bethesda Terrace is Angel of the Waters, also called Bethesda Fountain. The statue references the Gospel of John, which describes an angel blessing the Pool of Bethesda and giving it healing powers. The fountain commemorates the Croton water system, which first brought fresh water to New York City in 1842. The angel carries a lily in her left hand -- a symbol of the water's purity, very important to a city that had previously suffered from a devastating cholera epidemic before the system was established. The piece is the only statue that was commissioned for the Park. Created by Emma Stebbins, it also marked the first time a woman received a public art commission in New York City.

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