

Riverfront
By
Clay Robeson

28 Plays Later

Day 16

February 16, 2018

ACT I

SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP: RIVERFRONT'S STAGE. EMPTY SAVE FOR PROJECTION SCREENS AT THE BACK. THE TURNTABLE IS MOVING SLOWLY, CLOCKWISE. THE EDGE OF THE STAGE IS LINED WITH LEDs.

AS CHARACTERS SPEAK, IMAGES, VIDEO, AND WHATEVER ELSE WE CAN FIND APPEAR ON THE PROJECTION SCREENS SUPPORTING THE DIALOGUE.

A YOUNG BOY, ABOUT 10, ENTERS DOWN THE BAR SIDE APEX STAIRS AND STANDS, FACING THE APEX, JUST OFF THE TURNTABLE.

BOY: I was ten years old the first time I stepped on this stage. Rainmaker had just ended, and we were building the set for Mousetrap. That first day, I learned how to Duchman muslin flats together to create a fake wall. I was entranced.

A TEENAGE BOY ENTERS DOWN THE BOOTH SIDE APEX STAIRS, AND AS HE REACHES THE APEX, BOY TAKES A STEP BACK ONTO THE TURNTABLE AND BEGINS TRAVELING AROUND THE STAGE.

TEEN: There were so many amazing people here. Richard, Lloyd, Kay, Rob, Katherine, Joe, Carrie, Bob, Deb, Virginia, Sue, Dixie, Bill, Elaine... so many. Too many to list them all. But they quickly and passionately became my second family.

BOY STEPS OFF THE TURNTABLE AND TEEN STEPS BACK TO TAKE HIS TURN CIRCLING.

BOY: I was eleven when I ran lights for the first time.

TEEN: (from the turntable) Running lights is a generous term.

BOY: Okay. I was an extra set of hands on "The Monolith." That's what we called the huge contraption that ran the lights. It had 12 small dials about the diameter

of a donut that ran the individual light circuits, and two plate sized master dimmers that didn't work. I was really there as an extra set of hands for lights up and blackouts. Three people worked four dimmers each to get the lights on as fast as possible. I slept on the spotlight platform between cues.

THE TWO SWITCH PLACES AGAIN.

TEEN: I stage managed my first show at thirteen.

BOY: (from the turntable) Also a generous term!

TEEN: I ran sound and called cues for the first time at thirteen, with my best friend on the light board, and my sister did props. I can't remember much about the show now, but it was the first time I really felt like a responsible member of the community. I had a job, and it was important. The people at the theater treated me as an equal, and that made me work even harder to make them happy.

THE TWO SWITCH PLACES.

BOY: The first time I acted on this stage was for the Children's Summer Theater Workshops. We came in and learned about theater while putting together a show. I was the King in sleeping beauty, and Stromboli in Pinocchio. I even got to fill in as one of the narrators in an adaptation of Shel Silverstein's Lafcadio, the Lion Who Shot Back when someone got sick.

COLLEGE STUDENT ENTERS FROM THE BAR SIDE ALLEY AND WALKS TO THE APEX. BOY JOINS TEEN ON THE TURNTABLE.

STUDENT: The first musical I saw was Pippin. I watched it so many times I knew all the songs by heart. Thirty seven years later, I can still sing them. That was when I truly fell in love with theater. Plays were amazing and funny and sad, but musicals were MAGIC.

STUDENT AND BOY SWITCH PLACES.

BOY: And all I wanted to do was sing.

BOY AND TEEN SWITCH.

TEEN: And so I did. All the time.

TEEN AND STUDENT SWITCH.

STUDENT: This place made me who I am.

MAN WALKS OUT FROM BETWEEN PROJECTION
SCREENS AND JOINS STUDENT AT THE APEX. AS
TEEN AND BOY COME AROUND, THEY JOIN THEM.

MAN: And everytime I walk in those doors, I'm a ten year old boy again, marveling at the music and laughter. And I'm a teen, who has an amazing group of insanely diverse friends at a time when diversity wasn't a thing. And I'm a college student, coming home for the summer, excited to jump back in and help. And I'm an adult. Proud of what is here, and what will continue once this space goes dark and Riverfront has a new home.

BOY: This place is love.

TEEN: This place is growth.

STUDENT: This place is knowledge.

MAN: This place is home.

BLACKOUT.