



BWW Review: A LION IN WINTER at TRT is a Theatrical Masterpiece

November 22 by Marina Kennedy



"Well, what should we hang, the holly or each other?"

by King Henry in *A Lion in Winter*

The Lion in Winter, a great American classic, will be performed in the Joan and Robert Rechnitz Theater at Two River Theater (TRT) through December 4th. This is a truly fabulous production, one that shouldn't be missed by metro area audiences. Written by

James Goldman, the play features superb direction by Tyne Rafaeli and an outstanding cast. This is an ideal show to herald the holiday season.

A Lion in Winter is set during Christmas in the year 1183. Henry II of England is an energetic and temperamental ruler who has imprisoned his once beloved wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine. There is great conflict among their three adult sons, Richard, Geoffrey, and John, who all aspire to inherit the throne. Their disagreements are exacerbated by the favoritism of their parents. And the family has a royal Christmas guest, Phillip, the King of France, who is the son of Eleanor's ex-husband, Louis VII of France. To complicate matters further, Phillip's half-sister Alais has become King Henry's young mistress. This exciting story, laced with humor and romance, has many twists and turns as the royals plot their vengeful schemes. The tale, steeped in history, reveals the unpredictable behaviors of a dysfunctional family.

The seven-member cast of *The Lion in Winter* couldn't be better. These exceptional thespians master their distinctive characters along with the wonderfully crafted, clever dialogue and the intrigue of the play. The company includes Michael Cumpsty as Henry II King of England; Dee Hoty as Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry's wife; KeiLyn Durrel Jones as Richard Lionheart, the eldest son; Hubert Point-Du Jour as Geoffrey, the middle son; Noah Averbach-Katz as John, the youngest son; Ronald Peet as Phillip,

King of France and Madeleine Rogers as Alais, the French Princess. You will be fascinated by the dynamics of the characters' interplay with love/hate relationships often taking center stage.

The Lion in Winter comes to life on the TRT stage thanks to the abundant talents of the Design Team with scenic design by Kristen Robinson; costume design by Andrea Hood; lighting design by Jennifer Tipton; sound design by Josh Schmidt; hair and makeup design by Dave Bova & J. Jared Janas. The Fight Director is J. Steven White and the Casting is by Jack Doulin+Sharky. The Production Stage Manager is Jenny Kennedy.

With the holidays in full swing, gather your group and be treated to a true theatrical masterpiece and see *The Lion in Winter* at Two River Theater.

The Lion in Winter will be performed at Two River Theater through December 4th. The theater is located at 21 Bridge Avenue, Red Bank, NJ 07701. For ticketing and more information, call (732) 345-1400 or visit their web site at <http://www.tworivetheater.org/>.

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