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Local Actors Guild of Saratoga presents

Chasing Charles

By J.J. Buechner

Directed by Jonathan Pate

(Saratoga Springs, NY) *Chasing Charles*, is the First production of the Local Actors Guild of Saratoga's (LAGS) 2015-2016 season and will run from November 14 and 15 and 21-22, 2015. The Capital Region community theatre, winner of the Times Union Best of 2015 award, in downtown Saratoga Springs is celebrating its 10th season under the leadership of Jeremy Buechner, Artistic Director.

Chasing Charles examines the life of Charles Elsen, a native of Schenectady, NY, a world class Wig Designer and Makeup Artist and his death in 1985 from spinal meningitis complicated by AIDS. After a failed career as an opera tenor Charles (played by Matt DeMarco LAGS Cabaret) started his own company, Charles Elsen & Co., with longtime friend Dennis (Played by J.J. Buechner). Charles' mother Angela (played by Ann Milliken and Melissa Putterman-Hoffman in rotation) with Dennis and Edward (played by Oliver Ord, LAGS Cabaret, Company), a fellow associate at Charles Elsen & Con., witness the rise of Charles' career and his hypersexual lifestyle in the pre-AIDS New York City gay culture including his turbulent long term relationship with Brian (played by Christopher Malatesta, LAGS The Normal Heart, Rent) a young street wise man from the Midwest.

Charles R. Elsen, studied singing as a tenor at the Juilliard School of Music. He entered the New York City Opera chorus in 1967, and while there, was encouraged by Beverly Sills, Julius Rudel and Tito Capobianco to pursue a career as a makeup artist. He established Charles Elsen & Company to collaborate on makeup and wig design with companies throughout America and abroad in consultation with directors and designers. Among companies with which Mr. Elsen worked were the New York City Opera, the Washington Opera, the Cincinnati Opera, the Edinburgh Festival and the Australian Opera in Sydney. He also created individualized makeup and wigs for singers including Miss Sills, Joan Sutherland, Birgit Nilsson, Placido Domingo, Luciano Pavarotti, Richard Tucker and Victoria de Los Angeles. The well-remembered makeup worn by Norman Treigle and Samuel Ramey as the devil in "Mefistofele" was Mr. Elsen's creation. Mr. Elsen's work was seen on many installments of the PBS Great Performances series, on "Live from the White House" and on several other programs. Mr. Elsen was responsible for the wig and make up design for the 1983 Broadway revival of "On Your Toes" revival, starring Natalia Makarova, and the 1981 off-Broadway production of *Miss Julie* for Roundabout Theatre Company.

***Chasing Charles* will be presented at The Saratoga Arts Center at 320 Broadway, Saratoga Springs. Performance dates and times: Saturday at 2pm & 8pm and Sunday at 7:30pm. Tickets: \$20 general admission. Tickets may be reserved on the phone at [518-393-3496](tel:518-393-3496).**

About Local Actors Guild of Saratoga Local Actors Guild of Saratoga (LAGS) is a nonprofit community theater organization in Saratoga Springs, New York, established in 2006. The 2015-2016 season includes *Chasing Charles*, *The Odd Couple*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *The Full Monty*.