



The Red Velvet Cake War

Stage Right Productions

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Stage Right serves up slice of fun with 'Red Velvet Cake War'

By **SONDRA HERNANDEZ**
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If the play "Greater Tuna" and the TV show "Mama's Family" had a baby, it would be "The Red Velvet Cake War."

That's how play director Melody Montez describes Stage Right Productions' new show.

"The Red Velvet Cake War" opens tonight at the Crighton Theatre in downtown Conroe and continues weekends through May 5.

Written by the same trio of playwrights who penned "Mama Won't Fly," "Christmas Belles," "Dearly Beloved" and "Southern Hospitality" (all previously staged by Stage Right), Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten offer this sweet treat that is suitable for all ages.

This funny Southern-baked comedy follows three cousins - Gaynelle, Peaches and Jimmie Wyvette - as they attempt to throw a family reunion. Their outrageous antics have the whole town of Sweetgum talking. Things spin hilariously out-of-control when a neighbor's pet devours everything edible, a one-eyed suitor shows up to declare his love, and a shocking, high-stakes wager is made on who can bake the best red velvet cake.

Since the Jones, Hope and Wooten shows are set in Texas, Montez said the shows play well in this area.

And she suspects you might recognize some characters from your own family within the 11-member ensemble cast.

The three cousins are portrayed by Stage Right board member and founder Amy Sowers as the slightly unhinged Gaynelle, Renee



Photo courtesy Stage Right Productions

Carolyn Wong as Elsa and Steve Murphree as Newt in what director Melody Montez said is one of the funniest scenes in the show.



Photo courtesy Stage Right Productions

Chanda Rhoades as Jimmy Wyvette with Liz Curtin as Bitsy Hargis in "The Red Velvet Cake War."

WHAT TO KNOW WHEN YOU GO

"The Red Velvet Cake War" comes to the historic Crighton Theatre at 234 N. Main in downtown Conroe from April 19 through May 5, Friday and Saturday nights at 8 p.m. and two Sunday matinees April 28 and May 5 at 2 p.m. Tickets can be obtained by calling the box office at 936-441-7469 or online at www.stage-right.org. Tickets are \$17 for adults, \$15 for seniors and \$12 for kids. Discounts are available for groups of 20 or more. Please bring non-perishable food items for donation to the Montgomery County Food Bank.

Cannon as the mortuarial cosmetologist Peaches, and Chanda Rhoades as the rough-around the edges Jimmie Wyvette.

Two funny ladies making their return to the Crighton

stage in this production are the ever-hilarious Marilyn Moore as the self-righteous Aunt LaMerle and the delightful Terry-Lynn Hale as

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Photo courtesy Stage Right Productions

Terry Lynn Hale, left, as Cee Cee Windam and Amy Sowers, right, as Gaynelle in Stage Right's "The Red Velvet Cake War" that opens tonight at the Crighton Theatre. Call 936-441-7469 for tickets.

STAGE RIGHT
presents
The Red Velvet Cake WAR

by Jessie Jones,
Nicholas Hope &
Jamie Wooten

April 19 - May 5, 2013
Laugh out loud Southern comedy where the Verdeen family of Sweetgum Texas attempt to throw a friendly family reunion.

at the historic **Crighton Theatre**
234 N. Main in downtown Conroe
Tickets: 936-441-7469 (SHOW)
www.stage-right.org

Join us for the Red Velvet Cake Recipe Contest Opening Night!

Please bring canned goods for donation to Mont. Co. Food Bank
Funded in part by the Conroe Commission on Arts & Culture
Presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service



Photo courtesy Stage Right Productions

Renee Cannon, Todd Brady and Amy Sowers in "The Red Velvet Cake War."



Photo courtesy Stage Right Productions

Marilyn Moore as Aunt La Merle and Quint Bishop as Uncle Aubrey in "The Red Velvet Cake War."



Photo courtesy Stage Right Productions

Chanda Rhoades, Renee Cannon and Amy Sowers are not hiding anything as the three cousins in "The Red Velvet Cake War."

RED VELVET

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Mama Doll Hargis and Cee Cee Windham the hostess of Sweetgum's cable access show Hospitality House.

Joining them in the cast is Steve Murphree as the love-struck one-eyed Newt Blaylock, Quint Bishop as the cantankerous cake judge Uncle Aubrey, Mark Wilson as clumsy Sheriff Grover Lout, Elizabeth Garrett Curtin (making a quick return to the Crighton where she was seen as Kitty in "The Drowsy Chaperone") as priss-pot neighbor Bitsy Hargis, Carolyn Corsano Wong as the German court appointed psychologist Elsa Dowdall, and newcomer Todd Brady as the unusual cousin Purvis Verdeen (to be branded 'unusual' among this bunch is really quite an achievement).

Montez is familiar with Jone Hope Wooten comedies as she was in both Stage Right productions of "Christmas Belles" and was one of the leads in "Mama Won't Fly."

Montez said it's been like old times working with ac-

RED VELVET CAKE RECIPE CONTEST OPENING NIGHT

As an added treat, there will be a Red Velvet Cake Recipe Contest tonight at the Conroe Art League Gallery. All entrants need to bring their cake to the gallery located at 127 Simonton Street (right around the corner from the theatre) between 5 and 6 p.m. when the judging will begin.

tors and crew members that she hasn't worked with in 10 to 15 years.

Most of the play takes place in an old Victorian home with walls Montez decided needed to be stark Tiffany blue.

She said the bright colors make the set uplifting and fun - much like the rest of the show.

"There's not one sad moment in the show," she said. "It's joke after joke and story after story."

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All entrants will be photographed with their cake. (Homemade only please and please provide the recipe for your cake.) All entrants will receive a free ticket to be exchanged for a ticket to "The Red Velvet Cake War" or the summer production of "The Wizard of Oz."

The winner will be announced at intermission and will receive a season ticket (\$80 value) to the upcoming "Season of Nostalgia" which begins in September (Shows include: "Arsenic & Old Lace," "A Christmas Story," "Anything Goes," "Driving Miss Daisy" and "Hair-spray"). After the performance a reception at the gallery will feature the contest cakes as dessert.

GOLDEN NEEDLES QUILT GUILD TO DISPLAY CHARITY QUILT

Since a treasured family quilt figures into the storyline of the show, the Golden Needles Quilt Guild will have an information table in the

lobby. Members of the Golden Needles Quilt Guild will be on hand opening weekend and the first Sunday matinee. The Guild was established as a charitable quilt organization for the community of Conroe and the surrounding area of Montgomery County. They will be selling raffle tickets for a charity quilt they will have on display in the lobby.

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REPORTS

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Conroe - 13 demerits - Improper hand washing / No hand sink installed / Inadequate soap & towels at hand wash facilities / Improper manual warewashing & sanitizing
 Taqueria Tierra Caliente and Meat Market - 13775 FM 1314, Conroe - 15 demerits - Improper labeling of ice bags / Possibility of cross-contamination of raw meats in display case / No date mark on potentially hazardous foods in cooler / Improperly cleaned/sanitized interior of microwave

Mama Juanita's II Mexican Restaurant - 1118 League Line Rd., Conroe - 16 demerits - Improper cold hold temperature on iced down products / Open drinks in food prep area / Improper handling of ready-to-eat foods without gloves / Improper wastewater disposal
 Loop Food Mart - 20816 Loop 494, New Caney - 17 demerits - Improper hygienic use of hand sink / Improperly labeled ice bags / Improperly stored toxic items / Inadequate towels at restroom hand sink / No thermometers provided