

# FootLights

ILLUMINATING THE THEATRE  COMMUNITY

*Kentwood Players  
presents*

## *The Miracle Worker*

by  
**William  
Gibson**

*Based on Helen Keller's  
autobiography  
"The Story of My Life"*

*Directed by Shawn K. Summerer  
Produced by  
Elizabeth Summerer & Alison Mattiza*

*Westchester Playhouse  
8301 Hindry Ave. | Los Angeles, CA 90045  
310.645.5156 | [www.kentwoodplayers.org](http://www.kentwoodplayers.org)*

**May 11 - June 16, 2012**

*Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.*



# The Miracle Worker

by William Gibson

Director

Shawn K. Summerer

Producers

Elizabeth Summerer and Alison Mattiza

Set Design

Tony Pereslete

Lighting Design

Robert Davis

Costume Design

Jayne Hamil and  
Jon Sparks

## Cast

(in order of appearance)

Captain Keller .....	Scott Martin
Kate Keller .....	Elizabeth Bouton
Doctor .....	Barry Nackos
Helen Keller .....	Francesca Farina
Martha Washington .....	Kennedy McIntosh
Percy Washington .....	Javon Willis
James Keller .....	Ben Birmingham
Aunt Ev .....	Vada Foster
Annie Sullivan.....	Faith Streng
Dr. Anagnos .....	David Kunzle
Blind Girls.....	Adeline Hall, Emilia Holt, Caroline Macou
.....	Fiona Okida, Grace Rector, Emilia Zielinski
Viney .....	Patricia Newman

Time: The 1880's

Place: In and around the Keller homestead in Tuscumbia, Alabama  
also, briefly, the Perkins Institution for the Blind, in Boston.

There will be two 15-minute intermissions between the acts.

Decaf coffee will be served at the first intermission, courtesy of Kentwood Players

Produced by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

## Director's Statement

When watching a production of *The Miracle Worker* I always got the sense that I was being given a gift. A window into how an inspiring individual became who she was. Perhaps it's because the play is one of the few truly accurate portrayals of historical events. As with any piece of entertainment, creative liberties were taken, but many of the events you will see today on this stage actually took place. Which is largely why the message has such impact.

Helen Keller is someone we can all be inspired by. She grew up to be a highly active member in the medical, political, and educational fields. All this, when at the age of 6 nobody thought she would have the mental capacity to effectively keep herself clean. Nobody except Annie Sullivan that is.

That is why I wanted to direct this play. It shows all of us that no matter what first impressions may say, no matter what expectations others may have of us, and no matter what physical limitations we may have, if we have the persistence and determination inside to constantly strive to make ourselves better, there truly is no limit to what we can achieve.

Thank-you, and enjoy the show.

## About the Cast



**Ben Birmingham** (James) – Ben is a 20-year-old film major, but all the movies in the world can never keep him away from his background in theatre. He is so excited and honored to be portraying the part of James Keller, and even more grateful to the people of Kentwood Players for having such faith in him to have him jump on board at such a last minute! Ben hopes to be a part of many more productions at Kentwood, and is so privileged to be a part of this welcoming, talented, and hard-working cast! Break many legs, everyone!



**Elizabeth Bouton** (Kate) – Elizabeth is very excited to be back at Kentwood where she was last seen onstage as Nancy in *Oliver!* Other Kentwood credits include Lucille Frank in *Parade*, Edwin Drood, Molly Brown, Gabby/Bobbi, and Sister Mary Amnesia. She has been very fortunate to play parts such as Desiree Armfeldt, Sally Bowles, Baker's Wife, Penelope Pennywise, Annie Oakley, Reno Sweeney, Aldonza, Tracy Lord, Julie Jordan, Meredith Parker...among many others. Many thanks to Shawn for the opportunity and kudos to this very talented cast and crew! Love to SKS and FLAMES MM!



**Francesca Farina** (Helen) – Francesca is very honored to have been chosen to play this challenging role. This is her third main-stage production for Kentwood Players. Previous roles include Young Helen in *Hollywood Arms* and Annie in *Annie*, where she was nominated for a Marcom Masque award for Best Actress. Other roles include Cowardly Lion in *The Wizard of Oz*, a female Charlie Buckett in *Willy Wonka* and Goldilocks in *The Trial of Goldilocks*. Francesca is in sixth grade and enjoys singing, gymnastics, and reading in her spare time. She can't wait for her first visit to Broadway. Special thanks to her parents and Shawn, Elizabeth, Alison, Drew and the entire cast and crew.



**Vada Foster** (Aunt Ev) – *The Miracle Worker* was on the top of the list of shows Vada most wanted to do, and when she was 19 her dream came true when she played Annie. More than a few years later, she is once again part of this marvelous show, and as a bonus, she gets to work with many dear and talented people whom she has worked with before on such shows as *Nicholas Nickleby*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Present Laughter*, and *The Farndale Avenue Murder Mystery*. She is honored to be part of this talented cast, and gives thanks to Shawn for including her among them.



**Adeline Hall** (Blind Girl (Alice)) – Addy is a nine-year-old 4th grader at Da Vinci Innovation Academy. She has studied ballet, jazz, piano, voice and viola. She discovered a love for musical theater in a recent class at Outside the Box in a performance of *Little School of Horrors*. She is thrilled that after her first audition, she was chosen to be in *The Miracle Worker* and looks forward to many more theatrical productions.



**Emilia Holt** (Blind Girl) – Emilia is very excited to appear in the Kentwood production of *The Miracle Worker*. Previously, Emilia has worked behind the scenes in Kentwood Kids productions, and she is thankful to Shawn and the supportive Miracle Worker team for the opportunity to be part of this show. When Emilia is not at the theater, she plays multiple sports, competes on the 7th grade Academic Pentathlon team, dabbles on the flute, and writes for the school newspaper.



**David Kunzle** (Anagnos) – For many years in the distant past David applied a combination of theatrical and gymnastic skills at the Renaissance Faire under the name of Vaulting Confraternity of Santa Barbara. Since then he seems to have gotten type-cast as a Shakespearean-tyrannical, or alcoholic, or degenerate older man (remember me, you regulars, in *Bus Stop* at this theater?) Now for a change, he plays a character of great respectability.



**Caroline Macou** (Blind Girl (Beatrice)) – Caroline has enjoyed acting in the Kentwood Kids' program for three years, first as the Goose in *Charlotte's Web*, then the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland*, followed by Mrs. Stiltskin, the Doctor, and the Witch in *A Grimm Night for Hans Christian Andersen*. Her first experiences in theater began at age seven singing and acting in Santa Monica Playhouse productions. Now in her first main stage show, she is so thankful to be a part of such an amazing production!



**Scott Martin** (Captain Keller) – Scott Martin directed last year's hilarious Kentwood production of *The Farndale Avenue Murder Mystery* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at Theatre Palisades. He wrote and directed Kentwood's world premiere of the musical *Little Green Men* as well as two versions of *Forbidden Kentwood* for our member's workshop and last year's Marcom Masque Awards ceremony. His *Scream Queens -- The Musical* opens here on September 14th. [www.scottmartinmusicals.com](http://www.scottmartinmusicals.com)



**Kennedy McIntosh** (Martha) – Kennedy is a ten year old girl at Community Magnet Charter School. She enjoys acting and this is her second play with Kentwood Players. She is enjoying it very much. She hopes to come back to Kentwood in the future to do more shows!



**Barry Nackos** (Doctor) – Barry has previously appeared on the Kentwood stage in *George Washington Slept Here* and *Inherit the Wind*. He has also appeared in numerous productions throughout Southern California. When not at the Theatre he splits his time between selling Visa/MasterCard systems to retail merchants and health insurance for Anthem Blue Cross. His support system includes wife Peggy and three dachshunds. Many thanks to Shawn and Elizabeth for all their work on this great production!



**Patricia Newman** (Viney) – Patricia is very honored to be a part of Kentwood Players. Acting for her is like praying and worshiping, and the stage is the sacred place or altar where this communion is performed. The audience is our witness to our one humanity.



**Fiona Okida** (Blind Girl (Sarah)) – Fiona is excited to do her first talkie. She wishes that she could see the audience for this fantastic production of *The Miracle Worker*, but then she wouldn't have been cast as a blind girl. She is returning to Kentwood after her first on-stage death scene as a Sheep in *Candide*. Her favorite roles include Ngana in *South Pacific*, Amaryllis in *Music Man*, Gretl in *Sound of Music*, and the children's choir in *Joseph...* with the CLOSBC. Fiona thanks Shawn for giving her this opportunity.



**Grace Rector** (Blind Girl (Laura)) – Grace is 13 years old, and this is her first main stage production with Kentwood. She has performed with Kentwood Kids as Mrs. Gloop & Mrs. Beauregarde in *Willy Wonka*, the Duchess in *Alice in Wonderland*, “She of the pea” in *A Grimm Night for Hans Christian Anderson*, and will be in *Greece, The Musical!* She loves acting, and her passion is singing. She would like to thank Kentwood for being so welcoming, and for the many friends she knows will be life-long friends! Thank you to Shawn for giving her the chance to be in this production! She dreams of being a singer and actress, using the skills she has learned from Kentwood Players!



**Faith Streng** (Annie) – Faith is a native Michigander and is extremely grateful to be working with the Kentwood Players for the first time. She has studied at Northern Illinois University, Interlochen Arts Academy, The Second City (Chicago) and in Cluj, Romania. Her most memorable roles include Laura in *The Glass Menagerie* at Studio 5216, Natasha Rostova in *War and Peace* at NIU, Alphaeus in *Disciples* at NIU and Morgan Shaw in the premiere of *Thanks for Coming and Thanks for Waiting*.



**Javon Willis** (Percy) – Javon is very excited to be working with Kentwood Players. Javon is 13 and in the 8th grade. He enjoys singing and acting. His past shows include *Miss Nelson is Missing*, *Legends & Icons*, and *The Magic of Broadway* at his school. Dj Taco!



**Emilia Zielinski** (Blind Girl) – Emilia is very excited to be a part of *The Miracle Worker* cast. “It’s really fun being a part of a main stage play, especially with my friends,” she says. It’s the first main stage play she has been in. Emilia was in one of the Kentwood Kids productions and a few other small school plays as well. Besides acting Emilia loves to play sports; she has played soccer, softball, ice skating, swimming, and tennis.

## About the Director

**Shawn K. Summerer** (Director) – Originally from Michigan, Shawn got his start in theatre playing “The Letter K” in preschool. He received his BFA in Film Writing from USC and is currently represented by Circle of 10 Talent. This is Shawn’s second directorial credit at Kentwood having directed *Dracula* in the fall of 2010. He has also directed children’s theatre productions including *Oliver*, *King and I*, and *Joseph...* As an actor, his favorite roles include Smudge in *Forever Plaid*, Pedro Man of *La Mancha*, David in *Company*, Tommy in *Annie Get Your Gun*, Neville in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, and Edmund in *A Murder is Announced*. DOORBELL.

## About the Producers

**Elizabeth Summerer** (Producer) – Last seen onstage as Nancy in *Oliver* with her husband Shawn, Elizabeth is honored to be producing again alongside Ali! Past technical shows at Kentwood include producing *Dracula* and music directing *The Fantasticks* for the Fantastic Kirk Larson! Ali you rock! Shawn I’m so proud of you! Thanks to the cast and crew for all of their hard work and FLAMES MM!

**Alison Mattiza** (Producer) – Alison is so happy to be co-producing with her good friend Elizabeth and to be working on this wonderful show with Shawn and a very talented cast and crew! Earlier this year, Alison was on stage at Kentwood as Becca in *Rabbit Hole*. Previous Kentwood credits include co-producing with Elizabeth on *Dracula* and choreographing *Candide* and *Little Green Men* as well as performing in *Working* and *City of Angels*. As always, she thanks husband, Van and son, Jack for allowing her to pursue her “other passion,” theater.

## About the Designers

**Tony Pereslete** (Set Design) – Tony is a long-time member of Kentwood Players. He invites you to enter the world of Helen Keller and Annie Sullivan and to be inspired. Thanks to Jim, Kit, William, Bella and love to Lori.

**Robert Davis** (Lighting Design) – Robert is glad to be back to light *The Miracle Worker*, having lit *Oliver!* just moments ago (or so it seems). Previous lighting credits at Kentwood include *Hollywood Arms*, *Dracula*, *Parade*, *Annie* and *The Most Happy Fella*. Other SoCal lighting credits include *Play It Again Sam* at the Morgan-Wixson Theatre, *Copenhagen* at The Attic, and *The Philadelphia Story* at WCT. As always, he thanks you for joining us. Much love to JP.

**Jayne Hamil** (Costume Design) – Jayne is happy to be sharing hangars with Jon Sparks on this beautifully written show. She was on the costume teams for *Little Green Men*, *Annie*, and *Candide*, then went solo on *Hollywood Arms*. Thanks to Shawn, Bitty and Alison for inviting me to the 1880's to learn about bustles.

**Jon Sparks** (Costume Design) – Jon Sparks is thrilled to be back at Kentwood. His costume credits include: *Dracula* (with Elizabeth Summerer), *Anything Goes*, *Philadelphia Story*, *Company*, *Leading Ladies*, *The Fantasticks*, *Cinderella*. Wig credits include: *Carousel*, *Annie Get Your Gun*, *The Crucible*, *Grease*, *Damn Yankees*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Laughter on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor*. Regional credits include: *She Loves Me*, *Sordid Lives*, *Compleat Female Stage Beauty*, *City of Angels*, *Play On*, *A Little Night Music*, *Unsinkable Molly Brown*, *Cinderella*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. GMKL-FLAMES

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Michael Allen, Miriam Amster, Barbara Brophrey, Tom Brophrey, Patricia Butler, Bill Carter, Geanne Clarke, Maria Cohen, Michael Cohen, Sheldon Cohen, Sheridan Cole, Candice Courtney, James R. Crawford, Robert Davis, Scott DeFreitas, Harold Dershimer, Kathy Dershimer, Christopher Farina, Francesca Farina, Toni Farina, Marty Feldman, Gypsy Foster, Vada Foster, Marlene Grinde, Michael Grinde, Barbara Haberman, Adeline Hall, Joanne Hall, Russell Ham, Jayne Hamil, Kathleen Jequinto, George Kondreck, Kirk Larson, Leanna Lincoln, Warren Lincoln, Gretchen Luna, Ben Lupejkis, Scott Martin, Lori Marple-Pereslete, Alison Mattiza, Virginia Mekkelson, Treva Merritt, Melvin Miller, Barry Nackos, Patricia Newman, Colleen Okida, Fiona Okida, Roy Okida, Frank J. Olivadoti, Tony Pereslete, Judy Polak, Lee Polak, Jon Sparks, Bruce Starrett, Alan Stillson, Max Stormes, Faith Streng, Elizabeth Summerer, Shawn Summerer, Susan Weisbarth, Maura West, Zahra Zaveri

## Special Thanks

Costa Mesa Playhouse, Sheridan Cole-Crawford  
Ryan Rowles of the Los Angeles Baptist School

During the performance please turn your pagers to silent,  
and turn off your cell phones and alarms on your digital watches.  
There is no louder sound in a theatre than the rattle of cellophane.  
*Please unwrap your candy or cough drops before the play begins.*

Kentwood Players is a Member of the  
LAX COASTAL AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

You are invited to meet and greet cast members  
after the performance in the Green Room.  
Please use the outside stairway at the rear of the theater.

For up to date info about Kentwood Players visit our website

[www.kentwoodplayers.org](http://www.kentwoodplayers.org)

## Kentwood Players Coming Attractions

### *Doubt, A Parable*

A Drama by John Patrick Shanley

July 13 – August 18, 2012

Director: Gail Bernardi

### *Scream Queens – The Musical*

Book, Music & Lyrics by Scott Martin

September 14 – October 20, 2012

Director: Scott Martin

### *Fortinbras*

A Comedy by Lee Blessing

November 9 – December 15, 2012

Director: Drew Fitzsimmons

A Play to be announced

January 11 – February 16, 2013

## Group Sales

A special group rate for your organization or group can be a financial success as well as an entertaining evening (or matinee) at the theatre. For further information call:  
Box Office (310) 645-5156

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**directed by Drew Fitzsimmons and Melodie S. Rivers**

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**Past President 1985-1987**

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**Died March 15, 2012**

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In 1949, a group of dedicated performers came together to provide quality theatre at an affordable price for the Westchester community. More than 50 years later, the Kentwood Players are still going strong.

From Shakespeare to Simon, from Sondheim to Hammerstein, we have worked diligently, putting in countless volunteer hours, keeping our prices low enough to allow all in our community access to a magical evening or matinee in the theatre.

Now, we need your help. We have some critical improvements that will be beyond what we as a small community theatre can manage. We need a new roof, a new heating and air conditioning system, and most of our facility needs to be updated. For the first time in our history, we are asking our wonderful patrons and dedicated community members to partner with us and become sponsors of our beloved theatre.

There are many ways you can help. Of course, we welcome your contributions no matter how large or small. Together we can keep quality theatre in Westchester at prices that are still affordable for our audiences. Please take a look at our sponsorship opportunities and if we can answer any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

## ***THANK YOU FROM THE KENTWOOD PLAYERS***

***Donation envelopes can be found in our lobby.***

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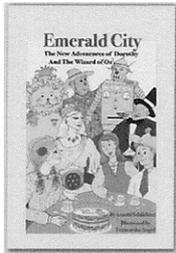
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