2022-2023
Theatre Season
Magic in the Air
Blinn College Division of Arts,
Kinesiology & Agriculture-
Brenham Campus

Ladies at the Alamo
Written by Paul Zindel

Directed by Brad Nies
Technical Direction by
Kevin Patrick
Costumes, Makeup and
Hair Design by
Jennifer Patrick
Ladies at the Alamo
By Paul Zindel
Produced by special arrangement with
Dramatist Play Service, Inc.

Resource Guide
This resource guide serves as an educational starting point to
understanding and enjoying Paul Zindel’s Ladies at the Alamo.
Please note that the interpretations of the theatrical work
may differ from the original source content.
Synopsis

The magic of the theatre is alive and well at the Alamo Theatre in Texas City, Texas. But when Dede Cooper, the artistic director for the facility, is challenged by her Chairman of the Board, a rich and powerful woman who wants to replace her, Dede and her supporters maneuver to outflank the foe. This hilarious play is filled with verbal battles, shocking revelations, and battle scars that will be long in healing.

Public Performances

April 27 & 28 7:00 PM
April 29 & 30 2:00 PM

Preview Performances

April 27 & 28 1:00 PM

Endowed Scholarship Auditions

April 29 4:00 PM

Dr. W. W. O’Donnell Performing Arts Center’s MRW Studio Theater
Blinn College-Brenham
Paul Zindel, Author

Born on May 15, 1936, Paul Zindel, Jr. was raised in Staten Island, New York. He wrote his first play in high school but later studied chemistry at Wagner College. While at Wagner, Zindel took a creative-writing course with playwright Edward Albee, who became a mentor to him. After getting his degree, Zindel worked as a high-school chemistry and physics teacher at Tottenville High School in Staten Island for ten years before devoting his life to writing. He wrote his award-winning play, The Effects of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds, in 1964, which ran off-Broadway in 1970 and on Broadway in 1978. His other plays produced on Broadway include And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little (1971), The Secret Affairs of Mildred Wild (1972), and Ladies at the Alamo (1977). Also known for his award-winning stories for young adults and children, Paul Zindel wrote 53 books before his death in New York City on March 27, 2003.
Serving as inspiration for the character of Dede Cooper, Nina Vance was born in Yoakum, Texas, in 1914. After graduating from Texas Christian University, Vance trained at the University of Southern California, Columbia University, and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. She returned to Texas to teach drama at Jefferson Davis and San Jacinto High Schools in Houston. After taking a leave of absence in 1946 from her teaching responsibilities, Vance began directing plays for Houston’s Jewish Community Center. It was there that Vance began to entertain the notion of opening a regional theatre. After sending out postcards, Vance was excited by the positive response. When the question of what to call the new facility was raised, actress Rita Cobler looked at the narrow path leading to the building intended for their use and suggested “The Alley.” The name was accepted unanimously and the Alley Theatre was born. Until her death in 1980, Nina Vance shepherded her theatre through its formative years and eventual growth. In passing, she relinquished control of this creative venue but not before forging its mission, proving its worth during trying times, and assuring its future as a piece of Houston’s history.
Major Characteristics of Paul Zindel's Plays

A Romantic Hero

While a strong pioneer of Texas theatre, the character of Dede Cooper sees herself as a mother to her staff. In doing so, she is willing to appear unprofessional to others by giving her employees what they need, no matter the cost.

A Nonconforming Antagonist

In contrast to the romantic Dede, opposition is presented in the character of Joanne Remington, the Chairman of Dede’s Board of Trustees. Despite Dede’s kindness, Joanne feels that, as artistic director for the Alamo Theatre, Dede is unprofessional and should resign.

A Less than Ideal Situation

The safe haven Dede has created for her employees at the Alamo Theatre is threatened when Joanne implies that Dede’s staff will most likely be fired after her resignation.
Strong Women in History

Since Ladies at the Alamo deals with strong women who stand up for what they believe in, below is a list of just some of the women who helped change history by doing the same thing!

Cleopatra VII Philopator, 69 BC—30 BC
Queen of the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt from 51 to 30 BC, Cleopatra was its last active ruler.

Clara Barton, 1821—1912
Known for her humanitarian work and civil rights advocacy, Barton was the founder of the American Red Cross.

Amelia Earhart, 1897—1939
An aviation pioneer and writer, Earhart disappeared while attempting to complete a flight across the globe in 1937.

Rosa Parks, 1913—2005
An activist in the civil rights movement, Parks is best known for her role in the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955.
Billie Holiday, 1915—1959
A jazz singer and songwriter, Holiday was a seminal influence on jazz and pop singing.

Marilyn Monroe, 1926—1962
A model, actress, and singer, Monroe has become an iconic representative of fame and female beauty.

Oprah Winfrey, 1954–
Talk show host, philanthropist, and media personality, Winfrey has shaped cultural trends and promoted liberal causes.

Diana, Princess of Wales, 1961—1997
An iconic figure of the late 20th Century, she was admired for her charity work; in particular, her work with AIDS patients.
Sources


Internet Source, www.britannica.com, “Paul Zindel, American Author”


Sources

Internet Source, www.ibdb.com, And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little.


