



SHAKESPEARE ON \$65 A PLAY; from the memoirs of SUZANNE J. FOSBERG

If there was anything I never planned on being, it was a theatre director. Once upon a time, in New York, things were a little rocky in my "painting career", so I decided to open a cafe-theatre, since my second love had always been the stage. My plan was to be the waitress, and let performers use my place to do their "thing". I had one director, but needed another to keep the cafe constantly running. But every would-be director who applied struck me as either full of hot air, or unrelatable.

There was no other choice but to do it myself--despite that I have never had a course in theatre, let alone directing. However, fifteen years on and around stages seemed like a reasonable education. To break in easily, I elected to do a version of "Coriolanus" with a cast of three, and an original jazz score on my 12 ft. square stage, with a budget of \$65. Nobody told me it was impossible, so I did it. It actually turned out pretty well, good reviews and all.

I really hated directing then--so much responsibility, so many perils. I was much more used to taking direction than to giving it. Directors are supposed to order people around, and that comes hard when you've been raised to believe that being bossy isn't nice. And, if you're female, better, and this is only your second show, it's hard to exude an air of authority. Sev-

eral male actors bluntly refused to work for a woman director, and many actresses, used to looking upon a male director as a combination love-object and father-figure tended to get out of hand.

One day I had a show-down with an actor who was 6'4" and 240 pounds,

an intimidating situation, to say the least. All the cast was watching, and I knew if I lost, I'd never be able to hold them together. Speaking softly, but very firmly, I assured the actor of the utter reasonableness of that downstage cross. I won. The giddy sense of power rose to my head, and I've been directing ever since.

I'm now into "producing" as well as directing in New Orleans, if you can call it producing with a \$200 budget. I don't make any money at it, but then, my materialist aspirations are few, and I have a part-time job. I usually end up doing my own sets and costumes, as a matter of sheer practicality. We recently renamed our group (from People's Players) to "Free Public Theatre", as that best described our aims.

We'll be opening our production of "Much Ado About Nothing" in Audubon Park in April, and hope to continue with at least two productions a year of Shakespeare in the park, and a couple of traveling children's shows, all free to the public. I want to get people hooked on theatre, and I have visions of helping to make New Orleans a really theatrical town, with opportunities for paid, professional actors, and a jubilant enthusiasm for all the arts. I guess I really believe that art is the salvation of mankind.



Fosberg the Director (lower right) in her cafe-theatre in New York City.

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flo kennedy

wields the sword of wit

at LSUNO

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Feminist Party founder, lawyer, defender of human rights and a product of double oppression against women and blacks, Florynce Kennedy will speak on the "Pathology of the Oppressed" at LSUNO on Thursday, March 29, 8:00 p.m., University Center Ballroom.

Expect verbal fireworks. Ms Magazine includes these in their article "The Verbal Karate of Florynce R. Kennedy, Esq.":

"If men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament."

"You've got to rattle your cage door. You've got to let them know you're inside and you want out. Make noise. Cause trouble. You may not win right away, but you'll sure have a lot more fun."

"When we first moved to Kansas City some

Ku Klux Klansmen gave us ten minutes to get out of the neighborhood. My father went out with a shotgun and said, 'I'll shoot the first man who steps on this porch. After that you can get me.' And you know, those Klansmen never came back."

"The innocence of good people is inexcusable. Naivete is a luxury only the pigs crats can afford."

"We ought to give the Pentagon budget to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the HEW budget to the Pentagon. Then we'd have enough money to cure cancer and sickle-cell anemia and muscular dystrophy and we'd only have telethons for Pentagon-orhea."

Admission at the door is \$1.00 for LSUNO students, \$1.50 for other students and \$2.00 for the general public.