

Sean McGuirk masterful as Rothko in "Red"

By Barbara White
Contributing Writer

Red," currently playing at Bennett Hall, should not be missed. It is excellent in every aspect and theatergoers are in for a real treat.

Theatre Workshop offers two outstanding plays as the season winds down. Both are thought-provoking and should have been performed in the summer, as both deserve sold-out audiences.

John Logan's "Red," winner of the 2010 Tony Award for best play, is set in the studio of abstract expressionist Mark Rothko in the late 1950s.

The play revolves around the relationship between Rothko and Ken, a young man and aspiring artist hired as Rothko's assistant. In their initial meeting, Rothko makes it clear that Ken is responsible for the artist's every whim, "no matter how demanding or demeaning. I am not your friend."

Sean McGuirk's portrayal of
RED, PAGE 14B

Red: Sean McGuirk, Vince Veilleux turn in powerful performances for TWN

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Rothko is masterful, capturing the many moods of the intellectual, unpredictable and irascible artist as he rails against aging and the rise of pop art, which he predicts will not stand the test of time.

Vince Veilleux is brilliant as the young assistant, exhibiting a full range of acting skills, holding his own with the experienced McGuirk. Veilleux has grown into a very fine actor before our eyes in his years as an apprentice on Nantucket. It is a tribute to the theater opportunities Nantucket has available.

Rothko makes it clear to Ken from the outset that he is not interested in teaching the young man. Ken is just there to assist the self-absorbed artist who has received a lucrative commission to paint a series of huge murals for the Four Seasons restaurant in the new Seagram's building in New York City.

Yet, teach he does, often in brutal fashion, never hesitating to make Ken feel ignorant and

inadequate, unmindful of the hurt he inflicts. He lectures about artists from Caravaggio to Andy Warhol. He berates Ken for not having read widely enough and usually dismisses the young man's opinions as inconsequential. He constantly badgers him to think deeper, to see more clearly.

The relationship between the two men evolves over the two years of their association. Ken gradually gains the confidence to challenge the older man. He attends exhibitions and defends the new young pop artists. He summons the courage to disagree with the powerful Rothko. Their battles are stimulating to watch as they argue over color, form, the role of art and the role that money plays in collecting art.

Rothko brags that he is part of the generation that destroyed Cubism. Ken uses his words against him, mocking him for not being able to make way for the next generation of artists.

"Red" is beautifully written and ably directed by Patrick Walsh, who gets the most out of his actors who raise and lower

their voices and use their expressive faces to great effect. Tension rises and falls.

Throughout the performance, the actors gaze toward the audience as if studying the murals Rothko is creating. The use of silence is effective, as both men are fully involved in looking deeply at the "paintings."

The audience is drawn into the intimate studio and into the debates. The actors successfully use their bodies to keep action in what could have been a static performance. In one dramatic scene, as the artists paint a huge canvas in tandem, it is as if they are engaged in a complex dance.

This is a mature play and mature performance, but not in the usual sense of the word. It is mature in the richness of the vocabulary and the importance of the topics: life, art, beauty, age, relationships. Each character has moments of rage, as well as tenderness. Each reveals hidden pain as their relationship deepens.

The set design by Peter Waldron, assisted by the skillful Annie Breeding, is up to TWN's

high standards, although the small pieces of paper attached to the walls of the studio did not seem very Rothko-like to me. It is the only criticism of this fine performance that I can muster.

"Red" is also a wonderful les-

son in the history of art. Never a Rothko fan, I left with a greater appreciation of the man and his art and will approach his work differently. I also went home and looked up some of the many references to art and lit-

erature. This play makes you think and you should see it.

Check the Island Calendar on page 9B for this week's show times, or log on to www.theatreworkshop.com

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Wendy Lee Herrick-Aleman a/k/a Wendy-Lee Herrick Aleman and William E. Aleman a/k/a William Elenilson Aleman to Washington Mutual Bank, FA, dated November 22, 2006 and recorded with the Nantucket County Registry of Deeds at Book 1052, Page 165, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder by assignment from Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, as receiver of Washington Mutual Bank f/k/a Washington Mutual Bank, FA to JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association dated October 1, 2012 and recorded with said registry on October 12, 2012 at Book 1348 Page 80, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 11:00 a.m. on October 14, 2014, on the mortgaged premises located at 8 Cedar Circle, Nantucket, Nantucket County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage.

TO WIT:

That certain parcel of land and the buildings thereon situated in Nantucket, Nantucket County, Massachusetts, bounded and described as follows:

Lot 10 on a plan by Hayes Engineering recorded at Nantucket Registry of Deeds on February 13, 1995 in Plan File 46-A.

Lot is now known and numbered as 8 Cedar Circle, Nantucket, MA. For title see a portion of the premises described in deed recorded at Nantucket Registry of Deeds at Book 986, Page 93.

* Meaning and intending to describe the premises described in and conveyed by deed 986/93.