

# Getting Out

## LAST NIGHT AT BOWL-MOR LANES

By Sheila Barth

One day, Greater Boston Stage Company Producing Artistic Director Weylin Symes got an exciting idea. Wouldn't it be cool to produce a play featuring bowling on stage.

That's right - bowling.

Why not? He answered himself, as he settled down and wrote his one-act, 90-minute comedy, "Last Night at Bowl-Mor Lanes".

Symes also had an underlying reason. In the mid-20th century, former movie theater basement, where its current rehearsal and offices are, formerly existed a bowling alley, where Symes' dad set up bowling pins when he was a teen-ager. In a sense, this play is Symes' way of honor-

ing the building and "a generation of women who don't always get to see themselves on stage," he said.

I'll spare you some details and strike out with a few reasons you don't want to miss seeing this - namely, because for the first time, two multi-award winning, versatile Boston area-super stars co-star, illuminating this world premiere production.

Nancy E. Carroll, who lives in Rockport, and Lynn native Paula Plum, are fantastic, portraying long-time friends-foils, Ruth and Maude. While Ruth is more reticent yet snippy, Maude is upbeat, hyper, and adventurous. The sole trait they share is their competitiveness.

They've broken into the closed local bowling establishment to settle a 49-year

score, once and for all. Their records are tied, and they want to break it, by playing one last game, to determine the winner. Problem is, the bowling establishment has been closed for awhile, has been sold, and will be handed over to the new owner the following day.

Wielding a flashlight, Carroll and Plum break into and wriggle through a small window space in the dark. As the first ladies of Boston-area theater stand on stage, side by side, and remove their ski masks, the audience greeted them with admirable applause.

I know why we're really here, quips Ruth. "After 49 years, I beat you, and it's killing you."

The ladies' rivalry is shattered when owner Ed arrives,

wielding a baseball bat, to catch the trespassers on his closed-up property. Thinking it's teen-agers who crashed his place, Ed's surprised and amazed to discover Ruth and Maude.

Ed says he came to the bowling alley to pick up some papers, but discovered the two sprightly ladies instead.

Another surprise erupts. Ruth's daughter Charlene also arrives, creating an awkward moment. Why is she there?

Other surprises, one after another, unfold, shocking all of them - and us. We also discover Maude has a more serious reason for breaking into the bowling alley, which she reveals later.

Bryn Boice has an easy task directing this superb Equity cast that also includes

### BOX OFFICE

World premiere of Greater Boston Stage Company Producing Artistic Director Weylin Symes' one-act, 90-minute comedy, appearing through September 29; 395 Main St., Stoneham. \$47-\$57; seniors, \$42-\$55; students with valid ID, \$20; Wednesday, Sept. 18, 25, at 2 p.m.; Thursday, 7:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 p.m.; Saturday, 3, 8 p.m., Sept. 21, 8 p.m. only; Sunday, 2 p.m. 781-279-2200, [greaterbostonstage.org](http://greaterbostonstage.org). Group discounts, 781-587-7907, [bryan@greaterbostonstage.org](mailto:bryan@greaterbostonstage.org).

Arthur Gomez portraying a married, bowling alley owner, Ed; Greater Boston favorite Ceit Zweil as Ruth's daughter, Charlene; and Winchester High School sophomore/YoungTheater Company actress Isabella Tedesco, who makes a brief, likable appearance in her MainStage debut, portraying Ruth's granddaughter Teddy.

Designer James Fenton has recreated a vintage hey-

day bowling alley, with a bowling lane, benches, blinking light-neon sign, juke box, shelves of bowling balls, and more; David Wilson captures the sounds of rolling balls in the alley, strikes, spares, and their return; and Jeff Adelberg's lighting switches off and on at poignant moments, including plot surprises.