



Alter ego: Joy Davidson (inset) plays President Theodore Roosevelt's daughter, Alice, (left) in *Alice—An Evening with the Tart-Tongued Alice Roosevelt Longworth*.



Bringing History Alive

Two shows offer fascinating looks at the Roosevelt family.

By Janina Birtolo

AS SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN writing and performing one-woman shows about historical characters for a decade, I always want to see how others accomplish the same creative task. That's why I'm particularly excited about March—it brings two very different chances to watch variations on the theme.

The first is a presentation at the Phil of *Alice—An Evening with the Tart-Tongued Alice Roosevelt Longworth*. Alice was, of course, the high-spirited daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt. He once quipped that he could govern the country or govern Alice, but not both. The play allows the audience to eavesdrop on the 80-something Alice and an unseen

interviewer from *The Washington Post* just prior to Tricia Nixon's wedding in 1971.

Joy Davidson, who brought opera diva Maria Callas to life for Phil audiences last year, stars as the inimitable Alice. The play was written by Kitty Felde, a public radio reporter and KPCC's Washington correspondent. Felde will take questions after the performances and give a behind-the-scenes lecture earlier in the week.

A locally grown offering also concerns the Roosevelts—albeit a different branch of the family. *The Four Loves of FDR* introduces us to four women who played central roles in the life of Franklin Delano Roosevelt: his wife, Eleanor; Lucy Mercer (Eleanor's secretary); Missy Lehand (FDR's secretary); and Daisy Suckley (friend and confidant). The piece, presented at the South County

Regional Library in Estero and the South Regional Library in Naples, was put together by Rusty Brown, who has artfully portrayed Anne Morrow Lindbergh, Clara Barton and Katharine Hepburn among others, and Regina Dowd, who has wowed audiences in local theater productions.

March also has plenty of other artistic offerings. One of the most exciting is the annual Artists' Studio Tour presented by the Friends of Art at the Patty & Jay Baker Naples Museum of Art. This year's artists are Gareth Rockliffe, John Long, Brian Brace, Holly Manneck, Sue Boydston and four Caribbean painters mentored by Jonathan Green.

Alice—An Evening with the Tart-Tongued Alice Roosevelt Longworth is March 24–25. Kitty Felde's *behind-the-scenes* lecture is March 23. The 15th Annual Artists' Studio Tours are March 7–8. (800) 597-1900, www.thephil.org.

The Four Loves of FDR is March 10 at South County Regional Library, Estero, (239) 533-4400, www.friendsofscrl.org/events; and March 30 at South Regional Library, Naples, (239) 252-7542, www.colliergov.net/library. ♣

HOT TICKETS

- Gulfshore Playhouse presents *Be Jost* March 3–7 and *A Doll's House* March 26 to April 11 at the Norris Center, Cambier Park. (239) 566-8394, www.gulfshoreplayhouse.org.
- The Naples Players presents *Fiddle on the Roof* March 3 to April 3 at Sugden Community Theatre. (239) 263-7990, www.naplesplayers.org.
- The Naples Art Association/von Liebig Art Center launch the inaugural Mercato Fine Arts Festival, featuring works by 125 artists from around the country, March 6–7 at Mercato, Naples. (239) 262-6517, www.naplesart.org/mercatofineartsfestival/.