



## Smithsonian Institution

*National Museum of African American History and Culture*

### Playbill for Mud River Stone

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ON THE AISLE . with Harry Haun

There's A Tavern in the Town (And Sardi's)--Broad-way's fall season lifted off with two musicals, and both celebrated on the same common turf: Warner Leroy's spectacular firefly haven in Central Park, Tavern on the Green. Emily Skinner and Alice Ripley essay Side Show's primary attraction, Daisy and Violet Hilton [[image: Emily Skinner and Alice Ripley, "Dynamic duo: Emily Skinner (l) and Alice Ripley celebrate Side Show's opening"]], a pair of real-life Siamese twins who were abused and exploited on America's midways. Both actresses thought it ironic these twins were finally getting their due in a musical--a serious musical (as opposed to Twenty Fingers, Twenty Toes, a Hilton Hellzapoppin' that campily kidded their plight), Ripley scripted her own Believe-It-Or-Not: "If Daisy and Violet were born today, chances are pretty good they'd be separated because they didn't share bones or organs--they shared fluids and nerves--but they were really just connected by flesh." The cast of Triumph of Love felt right at home at Tavern, [[image: F. Murray Abraham and Betty Buckley take a bow for their latest Triumph]] which seemed an extension of the fanciful shrubbery Heidi Ettinger did at the Royale Theatre to create an eighteenth-century garden retreat. F. Murray Abraham, who rules that stylish roost with Betty Buckley, turns out to be no stuck-up Oscar winner. He told the press he lets the stage manager hide his statuette on the stage for fellow cast members to find in performance. "I've done that on every show since I won it," he says. [[image: Jane Anderson & Lois Smith & Candy Buckley, "Playwright Jane Anderson is surrounded by her stars, Lois Smith (l.) and Candy Buckley (r.)"]] Producer Daryl Roth pitched her opening-night party for Jane Anderson's Defying Gravity at Sardi's. For star garnishment there were before-and-after leading ladies of the show's director, Michael Wilson---namely, Elizabeth Ashley from his Red Devil Battery Sign at The WPA and Ellen Burstyn from his forthcoming Long Day's Journey into Night at Houston's Abbey. "I've been very blessed to have worked with some of the best," he admits. "I loved working on this show. Lois Smith, especially, is a dream." If the performance he got from Candy Buckley as Teacher seemed natural, it should: "I taught five years school in Austin, Texas," confessed Buckley. And yes, she is kin to Betty---kinda: "I was married to one of Betty's brothers, and she is the aunt of my daughter."

Photos by Starla Smith.

[[Right Side]]

[[image-Macy's Santa Claus Adventure]]

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