

MERCER UNIVERSITY THEATRE

Presents

A Doll's House

by Henrik Ibsen

Directed by Darren Van Michael
Scene Design by Sean Johnson
Lighting Design by Marian Zielinski
Costume Design by Shelley Kuhlen

CAST

Nora Helmer	Mary King
Torvald Helmer	Brandon Duke
Kristine Linde	Diana Davidson
Nils Krogstad	John Hansford
Dr. Rank	Adam Gsegner
Anne-Marie (The Nanny)	Julie Jones
Helene (The Maid)	Tammy Tomasello
The Messenger	John Henry Forrester

Scene

The Helmer's Living Room. A small Norwegian town, 1879.

Act One

Christmas Eve - Morning.

Act Two

Christmas Day - Late Afternoon.

Act Three

The Day After Christmas - Night.

There will be a 7-minute intermission between each act.

Please turn off all beepers, watches, and phones.

No photographs or video may be taken during the performance.

Who's Who

DIANA DAVIDSON (Kristine Linde) is a senior double majoring in English and Christianity. This is her final show with Mercer University Theatre, and she is very appreciative of the opportunities Mercer Theatre has given her during her four year here. Diana is to be married in June, and she would like to dedicate this performance to him whose love, support, and sense of humor will take her through the rest of her life.

BRANDON DUKE (Torvald Helmer) came to Mercer in the Fall of 1999 from Tyler Junior College in Tyler, Texas. He will graduate this May with a B.B.A. Brandon hopes to continue his acting career on the graduate level next fall. Brandon wants to thank his family and friends for all their love and support.

JOHN HENRY FORRESTER (Messenger/Asst. Stage Manager) is a junior studying accounting at Mercer. This is his first time back on stage since high school. John is currently an active member of Phi Delta Theta and a Mercer cheerleader.

THOMAS FULLER (Assistant Director/Stage Manager) is a freshman from Augusta, GA. Although he acquired a great deal of experience acting and directing in high school, this is his first play at Mercer. He would like to thank all of his friends and family in attendance.

ADAM GSEGNER (Dr. Rank) is a graduating senior with a degree in Communications and Theatre Arts. He recently directed *The Effects of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds* for Mercer Theatre and has also appeared onstage as Monet in *Defying Gravity*. After graduation, Adam wants to go play out west and eventually make it to grad school for directing.

JOHN HANSFORD (Nils Krogstad) is a sophomore biology major. This is his third production at Mercer. He appeared as the Lion in *Androcles and the Lion* and most recently as Dr. Baugh in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. John would like to thank Dr. Douglas Young for being flexible with his lab schedule and would like to dedicate his performance to Lindsey Owings.

JULIE JONES (Anne-Marie) marks *A Doll's House* as her second play at Mercer. She is a senior English major and a photography minor. She has enjoyed her time at Mercer, especially studying abroad. She would like to thank the rest of the cast and crew for their great work and professionalism. This has truly been a learning experience.

SEAN JOHNSON (Set Design) received his B.A. degree in Theatre Arts from Marian College in Indianapolis where he studied acting and scenic design. This is Sean's 5th year as Technical Director at Mercer. Other credits in scenic design at Mercer include *Sweeney Todd*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe?*, *Extremities*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Androcles and the Lion*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

MARY KING (Nora Helmer) is a freshman majoring in marketing. This is Mary's first show at Mercer. She is absolutely thrilled to be in this production. Mary played Meg in *Little Women* at Theatre Macon three years ago so she is chomping at the bit to get back on stage. "Someone one said without theatre, my life would be a meaningless void. I wouldn't take it quite that far, but I understand the feeling."

SHELLEY KUHEN (Costume Design) has designed costumes for Mercer Theatre's recent productions of *Rocket Man*, *Extremities*, *The Good Doctor*, *An Inspector Calls*, *Androcles and the Lion*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and Mercer Opera's *Muskrat Lullaby*. She also designed the costumes for Macon State College's recent production of *Angels in America*. This is Shelley's fifth year at Mercer as Costume Director.

DARREN VAN MICHAEL (Director) is originally from Arkansas, and has a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts from Ouachita Baptist University and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Southern Mississippi. Darren most recently comes from William Carey College in Hattiesburg, MS where he worked as Interim Professor of Theatre and Director of their nationally ranked Forensics Team. Though Darren has written, adapted, directed or performed in over 100 plays, this is his directorial debut at Mercer Theatre. This year he joined the Mercer staff as Director of Development for the School of Medicine after marrying a Mercerian. His wife Shelley is a 1996 graduate of Mercer's Theatre and currently works as Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions.

TAMMY TOMASELLO (Helene) is also from Augusta, Georgia. This is Tammy's premiere on the Mercer stage as well. She is interested in psychology, advertising, and biology but has not yet chosen a major. Tammy would like to thank her family, friends, and Alpha Delta Pi for supporting her.

MARIAN ZIELINSKI (Lighting Design) Lighting was Marian's first design for the theatre during her undergraduate career at the University of Buffalo. This magical ethereal mysterious and fluid medium quickly became a significant part of her repertoire of artistic expression. In 1979, Marian completed an M.F.A. in costume design at Illinois State University and moved on to Wisconsin to begin working as a set, costume, and lighting designer. She has been a professor of theatre at Mercer since 1982. Professionally, her design work has been seen onstage in Fukuoka, Japan, The Illinois Shakespeare Festival, The Shawnee Theatre in Indiana and Musical Theatre Louisville. She resides in Macon with her husband Frank Macke.

Director's Note

When I chose *A Doll's House*, I knew I would be faced with certain dilemmas. First, just about everyone has read the play in some fashion and often this reading came from some coercion associated with high school English class. Overexposure has resulted in a wide range of opinions on the play's quality, significance, and ultimately, its ability to attract an audience. Frank McGuinness, with this fresh new look to the classic, has done his best to overcome this first obstacle. Second, because of Ibsen's astute observation of his own world and his ability to reveal the tragic inevitability of these characters on stage, the play has suffered over the years from so much scholastic surgery that most people can tell you little of the story but they can probably tell you how the play ends. I have heard this play termed "the first feminist play" and it may well be, but it's definitely more than that. When Janet McTeer performed as Nora in this new translation's premiere in 1997, she stated in an interview that the play is more than its final moments, more than about Nora's identity. This story is a marriage in peril during a time and in a place where the rules are set by men.

It would be easy with our modern sensibilities to condemn the men of this world and herald the women and their strength, but let us remember Ibsen's world. Simply put, his world, and therefore the characters' world, is a practical one. The tragedy is that we are not black and white, that nothing is ever black or white. But in a practical world, we must be defined in some way, shouldn't we? Are we defined by the decisions we make or merely by the questions we ask? The play ends so brilliantly with an unfinished line. It almost seems Ibsen himself has posed these necessary questions but cannot imagine how his world will deal with them.

I would like to thank Marian Zielinski and Frank Macke for giving me this opportunity to direct, to my wonderful cast and crew for their tremendous effort on a very difficult play, to Sean Johnson and Shelley Kuhlen for giving me as much work, creativity, beauty as too utterly swamped people can give and to Gloria Marshall and Emily Myers for their support in this endeavor. I would also like to dedicate this performance to my beautiful wife Shelley — I love you — and to Paul Oppy — Please get well soon. Everyone here misses you very much.

Darren Van Michael

Production Staff

Director	.....Darren Van Michael
Assistant Director/Stage Manager	.....Thomas Fuller
Assistant Stage Manager	.....John Henry Forrester
Scene Designer	.....Sean Johnson
Costume Designer	.....Shelley Kuhlen
Lighting Designer	.....Marian Zielinski
Technical Director	.....Sean Johnson
Set Crew	.....Candace Flatt, Dustin Fuller, .....Shenequa Johnson, Ashleigh McDaniel, Lauren McSwain, .....Adam Ridley, Misty Schmitt, Tye Walcott
Costume Shop Crew	.....Diana Davidson, Shelley Kuhlen, .....Courtney O'Neill, Marsha HongKham, Marian McHugh
Lighting Crew	.....Candace Flatt, Thomas Fuller, Dustin Fuller, .....Shenequa Johnson, Ashleigh McDaniel, Lauren McSwain, Tye Walcott
Light Board Operator	.....Thomas Fuller
Sound Board Operator	.....Lauren McSwain
House ManagerShenequa Johnson
Box OfficeShenequa Johnson, Courtney O'Neill

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By
**Henrick
Ibsen**

Directed by
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**March 30 to
April 5, 2001**

A
**Mercer
University
Theatre
Production**

**The
Backdoor
Theatre**