

Mercer University Theatre  
Presents

# The Marriage of Bette and Boo

By Christopher Durang  
Music Composed by Richard Peaslee

Directed by Paul Oppy\*  
Set and Lighting Design by Marian Zielinski\*  
Costume Design by Shelley Kuhlen

## CAST

Bette Brennan	Mandy Morris
Margaret Brennan	Kristi Coffelt
Paul Brennan	Chaz Duncan
Joan Brennan	Emily Barringer
Emily Brennan	Heidi Clinite
Boo Hudlocke	Jason Morris
Karl Hudlocke	Zach Broome*
Soot Hudlocke	Shelley Johnson
Fr. Donnally/Doctor	Charles Thomas*
Matt Brennan	Ayren Selzer

In Christopher Durang's autobiographical mordant comedy, *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, we watch two dysfunctional families as they deal with birth, death and everything in between. The play moves back-and-forth in time from the late 1940's through the 1970's.

Please turn off all beepers, cell phones and watch alarms.  
No cameras or recording devices may be used during the performance.

Produced by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

himself spending most of his time in the Stetson School of Business as he is a business major. "Never knew economics and balance sheets could be so sexy."

**Mandy Morris** (Bette) is a sophomore (from the Greek for "wise fool"). She has been seen previously in the Backdoor Theatre as an inebriated college student in *Red Sky Over Macon*, and an absurdist little old man in *Waiting for Godot*. She wants to thank Paul for his kind guidance, Marian for her trust, Frank for his advice and Tony for being so smooth. She is grateful for family, lovely cast mates, work study, her SM and her philosophy professor. "You don't vacuum gravy!"

**Paul Oppy\*** (Director) is the Davenport Professor of Communication and Theatre Arts. He has been teaching and directing at Mercer for thirty years. This is the 86<sup>th</sup> production he has directed for Mercer Theatre. He was Artistic Director of the Georgia International festival for Young Audiences for three years, and has been actively promoting the development of former and current Mercer student playwrights through Mercer Theatre's new play project.

**Ayren Selzer** (Matt) is a sophomore engineering major with a found love for the theatre arts. Previous performances include several one act plays, namely *Making Nice*, *Why Do We Laugh*, and *Assembly Line*, as well as *Cheaper by the Dozen* and *The Rocky Horror Show*. He has always enjoyed parts which call for absurdity or "bigger than life" personalities, but this change to a highly serious and tangible character is being embraced with open arms. In closing, Ayren would like to thank his parents, without whom he would be unable to exist; Dr. Taylor, who encouraged him to pursue his love of the theatre arts; Mrs. Chalfa, for making his dream of playing Riff Raff come true; and Paul Oppy for giving him a chance to do what he loves.

**Charles Trovontia Thomas\*** (The Doctor, Father Donnelly) is a junior majoring in Creative Writing and Theatre; and President of Mercer Players. He is excited to be on the Mercer Stage after his choral role in *Ragtime* at Theatre Macon. Charles would like to thank God, his family, his "family" away from home, the ladies who make those chicken sandwiches, and Mr. Wiggles whom he's missed this year. As always, remember those who have lost their lives doing theatre. "This one's for you, Bob."

**Marian Zielinski\*** (Set Designer, Lighting Designer) is a Professor in the Department of Communication and Theatre Arts and is beginning her 22nd season with Mercer University Theatre. Her directing credits include *Waiting for Godot*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *All in the Timing*, *The Illusion*, and *The*

## WHO'S WHO

**Emily Barringer** (Joan) is a Junior CTA major and the Vice-President of Mercer Players. This is the sixth Mercer production she has worked with and she would like to thank the cast and her friends and family for their support throughout the process. Also, Emily enjoys applause and flowers following each performance.

**Zach Broome\*** (Karl) is appalled at the notion that he has been type cast into the role of Karl. "I may be a nasty, relentless curmudgeon, but I'm no drunkard." Outside of Mercer, Zach works as a scenic designer and technical director for various theatres in the Macon area. Zach and his friend—and mentor—Tony Pearson most recently served as co-designers and technical directors for Theatre Macon's productions of *Les Miserables* and *Ragtime*. He would like to thank his good friends, Lauren and Charles (among many others) who put up with the real-life Karl every day.

**Heidi Clinite** (Emily) has worked with Tony in the shop for the past year. *Bette and Boo* is her first appearance on stage. Her favorite plays include: *Nun of La Mancha*, *RagNun*, *Waiting for Nun*, and *You're a Good Nun*, *Charlie Brown*. As second year music major, Heidi's principle instrument is the viola. For the last time, she would like to make the distinction between the string instruments: the bass is the biggest; the cello is held between one's legs, the violin is small and squeaky, and the viola sounds like a cello and it's held on one's shoulder like a violin, though it may burn longer. For your own sake, do not forget this fact. Thank you so much.

**Kristi Coffelt** (Margaret) is a Junior Spanish and CTA-major. She is from Chattanooga, TN, where she has worked with the Chattanooga Theatre Center on many productions. This is her first appearance on Mercer's stage, but she hopes it will not be her last. She would like to thank her family and friends for their encouragement and everyone who gave their valuable time and energy to make this production possible.

**Eric Cooney** (Assistant Stage Manager) is a sophomore here at Mercer studying Spanish and is on the Pre-Pharmacy track. This is his fifth production here at Mercer—his most recent accomplishment was stage-managing *Waiting for Godot*. Eric thanks Paul, Jonathan, the cast and crew and most of all the patrons for allowing him to develop himself and share his talent with the Mercer community. Eric would also like to thank his fellow Founding Fathers at Alpha Chi Rho for working with him through this busy season.



**Chaz Duncan** (Paul) is a very unattractive little boy who makes up for that fact by trying to be funny. In the past, he's participated in a few school plays—almost always as a villain. Among these parts was “Dark Lord” a character written around him and his earlier parts, specifically to “be loud, ugly, and scare children and the elderly.” Upon hearing he was not playing a malicious character, Chaz nearly passed out, but eventually found the ability to speak and said that he was happy to try something new.

**Shelley Johnson** (Soot) is a freshman at Mercer. She is double majoring in Vocal Performance and Theatre. Shelley is very excited, enthusiastic, and honored to have the opportunity to begin her Mercer drama career with this play. Shelley has played in *The Sound of Music* (Louisa), *45 Minutes from Broadway* (Flora Dora Dean), *Grease* (Rizzo) and her most recent international performance as Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors*. “I would like to personally thank my parents, Grandma Joyce, Stephanie, Robyn, Brian, Tiffany, and Jessica, the cast, Jonathan and Professor Oppy for supporting me and helping to make this performance fun and enjoyable.”

**Shelley Kuhen** (Costume Designer) designed costumes for Mercer Theatre's recent production of *Childe Byron, How I Learned to Drive, Into the Woods, All in the Timing* and Mercer Opera's *Trouble in Tahiti*. Shelley's designs were also seen in Theatre Macon's recent production of *The Laramie Show* and *Ragtime* and Macon State College's *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. This is Shelley's eighth year as Costume Director for Mercer Theatre.

**Jonathan Miles\*** (Stage Manager) is a senior Communications major, returning to Mercer after a semester-long hiatus. Previous Mercer stage management and sound design credits include *Poolside* and *Links, The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds, All in the Timing, Combustible/Burn* and *Into the Woods*, as well as the Mercer Opera productions of *The Magic of Mozart* and *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Jonathan would like to thank his family and friends for all of their love, support and encouragement, especially his beautiful fiancée, Alisha, and his friend and mentor, Paul Oppy. Jonathan would like to dedicate his work on this production to the memory of his younger brother, Michael, who lost his battle with melanoma seven months ago.

**Jason Morris** (Boo) is a sophomore at Mercer University. Although he has enjoyed acting and singing on the stage, this production is Jason's first appearance in Mercer Theatre. Aside from singing in Mercer Singers, he finds

*Good Doctor*, which toured to Kitakyushu, Japan. She has designed professionally for Music Theatre Louisville, The Shawnee Theatre, and the Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Marian is an avid painter, fiber artist, photographer, and swimmer. Her primary, ongoing research interest is visual semiotics. She is married to Dr. Frank Macke, who also teaches in the Communication and Theatre Arts Department at Mercer.

\*Denotes members of Alpha Psi Omega, National Honorary Dramatic Fraternity.

#### Production Staff

Stage Manager ..... Jonathan Miles\*  
Assistant Stage Manager ..... Abbie Berry, Lauren McSwain, Amy Riddle  
Technical Director ..... Tony Pearson\*  
Set/Lighting Crew ..... Zach Broome\*, Heidi Clinite, J.P. Haynie,  
..... Mandy Morris, Calvin Smith, Tim Smith, Charles Thomas\*  
Scenic Artist ..... Marian Zielinski\*  
Light Board Operator ..... Mark Stich  
Sound Board Operator/Sound Design ..... Eric Cooney  
Costume Director ..... Shelley Kuhlen  
Costume Crew ..... Mary King, Marian McHugh, Andilyn Williamson  
Poster and Program Design ..... Penni Hartley

#### Special Thanks

Penni Hartley  
Gil McPhaul of Stranz for hair and wig design  
Mary Zielinski

NEXT ON THE BOARDS.....

**proof** By David Auburn  
November 14-22, 2003  
The Backdoor Theatre  
AUDITIONS - October 6-7,  
6:00p.m. - Backdoor Theatre

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presents

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by Christopher Durang  
directed by Paul Oppy

September 26, 27, 30 - Oct. 4, 2003 at 7:30 pm  
Matinee, September 28, 2003 at 2:00 pm  
The Backdoor Theatre