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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S

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MERCHANT OF VENICE**

DIRECTED BY **SCOT J. MANN**

AT THE

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THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

DIRECTED BY SCOT J. MANN

Scenic Designer..... Marian Zielinski

Lighting DesignerMarian Zielinski

Costume Designer Shelley Kuhlen

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

With this production of *The Merchant of Venice*, we are attempting to tell the comic love story that makes it a comedy without masking the spiritual and moral warts that blemish the heroes. We're also choosing to tell Shylock's story without watering down either his harshness or his humanity. Shylock, through cruel twists of fate, blind rage, and the selective interpretation of the law, ends a broken man who has lost everything — his profession, money, faith, and family. It is not quite classic tragedy because he doesn't wind up dead, but in terms of human loss, this is a deeply troubling story that deals with issues we would far rather brush under the table.

Surrounding this is the story of three sets of lovers, each having their own moral flaws. The comic language is genius, and seeing a character that made you laugh moments ago turn and engage in socially condoned bigotry is jarring for our modern sensibilities. Shakespeare's play offers us neither a simple answer, nor a satisfying conclusion. But it does 'hold the mirror up to nature' and shows us our own selves in a rather unflattering light. Theatre has always provided a lens through which we can explore our place in a larger world, and examine our foibles, biases, and blind spots. It does provoke the conversation about who we really are. When will we learn "the quality of mercy is not strained?"

CAST LIST

Shylock	Lindsey Mouchet
Bassanio	Liam McDermott
Gratiano	Kevin Kersey
Antonio	Patrick Hamilton
Lorenzo	Sean Rayburn
Portia	Suzanne Stroup
Nerissa	Hannah Fancher
Jessica	Brittani Howell
Launcelot Gobbo	Patrick Mathis
Old Gobo	Larry Ross
Leonarda	Julie Allen
Duke of Venice	John Farrington
Tubal	Leeanne Griffin
Duke of Arragon/Gaoler.....	Cohen Bickley
Duke of Morocco	Evan Ayoub
Solanio.....	Ethan Arrendale
Salarino	Isaac Callahan
Balthasar	Alex Preston
Stephana	Harley Maddox

“Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, heal'd by the same means, warm'd and cool'd by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.”

The Merchant of Venice
Act III, Scene I

MERCER THEATRE PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director	Zach Broome
Stage Managers.....	Isaac Callahan, Ninti Chance
Assistant Stage Managers	Leah Parris, Sarah Beth Roach
Assistant to the Costume Designer.....	Lauren Parris
Costume Shop Crew	Shelley Kuhlen, Lauren Parris, Katie Trotter, Marian McHugh, Lindsey Mouchet
Lighting Crew	Isaac Callahan, Hannah Fancher, John Farrington, Leeanne Griffin, Tony Schmidt, Alex Preston, Ninti Chance
Hair and Wig Design.....	Laurel Astin
Wig Shop Crew	Laurel Astin, Kelly Mann, Mary Carr, Jessica Whitley
Set Construction Crew.....	Jake Adams, John Farrington, Liam McDermott, Tony Schmidt, Larry Ross, Isaac Callahan, Brittani Howell
Scene Painting Crew.....	Isaac Callahan, Ninti Chance, Hannah Fancher, John Farrington, Leeanne Griffin, Brittani Howell, Larry Ross, Suzanne Stroup, Jake Adams
Light Board Operator	James McNichols
Sound Board Operator	Tory Johnson
Graphic Design	Darlene Murphy

ORDER IN THE COURT...

Julie Allen (Leonarda) is a senior Theatre/Spanish double major and Anthropology minor at Mercer. This is her first time acting on the Back Door Theatre's stage, though she has been in several shows at Macon State College. She is very excited to be involved in *Merchant* and thanks everyone for welcoming her into Mercer Players.

Ethan Arrendale (Solanio) is a Biomedical Engineering sophomore on his first run working with the Back Door Theatre program. In his spare time not spent reading or playing video games, Ethan works with campus groups such as the Baptist Collegiate Ministry, Ballroom Dance Club or the Integrated Martial Arts Club. He thanks everyone involved with the show for all their patience, and especially Scot Mann for giving him the chance to play a role in this performance.

Evan Ayoub (Duke of Morocco) is an alumnus of Mercer University and is quite excited to have been offered a chance to be included in the latest Mercer University Theatre creation! He has always wanted to perform Shakespeare and is humbled at the opportunity to work with such a talented cast and crew! He hopes that this will not be his last appearance in the Back Door Theatre.

Cohen Bickley (Duke of Arragon) is a sophomore at Mercer majoring in Theatre. This is his first appearance on-stage and he's excited to be part of such a wonderful show and cast. Cohen would like to thank friends, family, and cast members for all their support.

Zach Broome (Technical Director) is beginning his sixth season as part of the Theatre department's creative staff. He most recently served as TD for the Mercer University production of *A Little Night Music* and as the scenic and puppet designer of *Alice in Wonderland*, both of which were performed at Macon's historic Grand Opera House. Zach is excited about the wide range of productions scheduled for this season and welcomes the new challenges that each show will bring. He thanks his family and friends for their love and support during recent months.

Isaac Callahan (Salarino/Stage Manager) is a super-duper senior at Mercer majoring in Media Studies and Theatre. This is his sixteenth time on-stage in the Back Door Theatre, and he is thrilled that it is a Shakespeare show. His most recent roles include Flo'rance in *The Colored Museum*, Tweedledum in *Alice in Wonderland*, and various roles in *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. He also appeared onstage at Theatre Macon as Jesus Costasuela in *The Odd Couple (Female Version)* and Charles Clarke in *Titanic, The Musical*. He thanks Scot for trusting him

to act and stage-manage at the same time (without blowing anything up!) and Ninti for being the most awesome co-stage manager ever. He also thanks his family and friends for letting him pursue this crazy acting thing without going crazy.

Ninti Chance (Stage Manager) is currently a freshman at Mercer University. This is her first time co-stage-managing and she believes it's a super fun job! She has been in ten shows since her freshman year at Mount de Sales. Her favorite performance in was *Titanic*. She has grown to like Shakespeare because of her work with Scot Mann and thanks him for being an awesome director. She also thanks the cast and crew for being so welcoming to a little freshbear!

Hannah Fancher (Nerissa) is a freshman Theatre major and is very excited to be working with the Mercer University Theater for the first time. She has never performed in a black box theater before and is excited to try it out. She loves to act and looks forward to many more successful productions with Mercer Theater.

Leeanne Griffin (Tubal) is a recent Mercer graduate with a degree in English Literature and Theatre. She currently works part-time as a tutor at Sylvan Learning Center. She has been involved in several Mercer productions over the last few years, her favorite roles being Madam Pace from *Six Characters in Search of an Author* and The White Queen from *Alice in Wonderland*. One of her many loves is Shakespeare, and she is thrilled to be a part of this production.

Patrick Hamilton (Antonio) is the son of Karen and Wayne Hamilton. He has two sisters and one loving niece. Patrick recently transferred to Mercer as a double major in Music and Theatre. He has performed on-stage at Theatre Macon as a sailor in *Anything Goes*, Jim Ferral in *Titanic*, and Phil Davis in *White Christmas*. Patrick would like to thank his family and the entire cast and crew of this production. "It is great to be a part of such a loving theatre family!"

Patrick Heise (Crew) is a freshman pursuing a major in Mechanical Engineering and hopes to soon declare his minor in Journalism and Media Studies. Along with the Mercer Players, he is involved in the Mercer Animal Rescue Club and Mercer Ballroom Dance Club. Although he is new to theatre he looks forward to working on his first production here in the Back Door Theater.

Brittani Howell (Jessica) is delighted to act with such an excellent cast in her first production with the Mercer Players. She is a senior English major who holds leadership roles at the Cluster, the Dulcimer, Sigma Tau Delta, the Mercer Service Scholars, and the Ballroom Dance Club. In her spare time, she can usually be found reading, making mischief, or planning international travel. She is deeply

grateful to be cast with two of her best friends, Sean and Suzanne, and equally happy to have made some great new friends in the process. She would like to thank the cast and crew for being generally awesome.

Cymone Jenkins (Crew) is a third year Biology major. She was part of the cast in high school musicals such as *Ragtime* and worked on technical crews for *Beauty and the Beast* and *Les Miserables*. This is her first collegiate level theatre production.

Tory Johnson (Sound Board Operator) graduated from Mercer in May 2011 and is thrilled to be working once again with the Mercer Players. Tory was most recently seen in Macon Little Theatre's production of *Legally Blonde: The Musical* as a member of the ensemble/D.A. Joyce Riley. Some of her favorite Mercer Theatre credits include *Ye Gods* (Psyche/Naomi), *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* (Ensemble), *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (Stepdaughter), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Stage Manager), and *Fiddler on the Roof* (Stage Manager). Thanks to everyone involved with Mercer Theatre for letting me stick around once more and play with you all! It's always a blast!

Kevin Kersey (Gratiano) is a freshman here at Mercer University, and very excited to be in this awesome play with such wonderful cast! Although this is his first production at Mercer, Kevin, a Maconite, has been in several plays at Theatre Macon downtown. His favorites include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Treasure Island*. Kevin would like to thank his folks, Phillip and Kathy, for their continued support, Scot Mann for granting him such a great role, Miss Shelley for her always incredible costumes, and the rest of the cast and crew for being so good at what they do!

Shelley Kuhen (Costume Designer) is in her seventeenth season as Mercer Theatre's Costume Director. Her designs have most recently been seen in our productions of *A Little Night Music*, *The Colored Museum*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, and *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. She is also Costume Designer for Mercer Opera where her creations were seen in their latest productions of *Indomineo* and *The Merry Widow*. Shelley is also employed by Theatre Macon, and her work was last seen in *Anything Goes*, *Titanic*, *Purlie Victorious* and *White Christmas*. She thanks her wonderful family for their continued love and support. She also thanks her amazing costume crew for their countless hours of hard work and for their encouragement, love and laughter.

Harley Maddox (Stephana) is a senior Theatre and English double major finishing her last semester at Mercer. She is proud to have been involved with Mercer Theatre throughout her undergraduate career. Most recently she was seen

as Lady Lavender in *Alice in Wonderland* at the Grand Opera House. She is also a member of Alpha Gamma Delta. She is excited to be working with some of her best friends once again and she wants to thank everyone involved with the show for their hard work and their ability to always put a smile on her face. She would also like to thank Scot for not making her play a boy.

Scot Mann (Director/Fight Choreographer), a Mercer alumnus, presently serves as Mercer's Director of Theatre. As director, he received a Meritorious Achievement Award for his direction of *Scapin*, by the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival in 2005. Scot is also an internationally recognized and award winning Fight Director, certified through the Society of American Fight Directors and the British Academy of Stage and Screen Combat. He has choreographed, performed and coached theatrical violence with such companies as The Steppenwolf Theatre, The Alliance Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Theatrical Outfit, Georgia Shakespeare Festival, and The North Carolina School of the Arts. He has also served as an instructor for the British Academy of Stage and Screen Combat in London, and Stage Combat Deutschland in Freiberg, Germany. As an actor, Scot has appeared with the Georgia Shakespeare Festival, New American Theater, New American Shakespeare Theatre, Atlanta Opera, motion capture talent for digital media, and various voice-over recordings for radio, T.V. and the Internet. Scot appeared as a stunt-player and served as tactical choreographer and gun wrangler for the newly released movie, *Eyeborgs*, as well as on-set Swordmaster and stunt double for the "Bollywood" epic, *Drona*. Scot is an alumnus of the MFA/PAT program at The Alabama Shakespeare Festival. He thanks Kelly and his magical daughter, Madelyn!

Patrick Mathis (Lancelot Gobo) is a senior majoring in Information Science and Technology and the IT Administrator at Sell & Melton L.L.P. He is very thankful for the chance to escape his home in the Computer Science building's basement and work on something that's not code. He thanks his family, Master Mann and the most wonderful cast. To my dearest Grandmother it's all for you, for being right as you always were. All my love for all eternity.

Liam McDermott (Bassanio) is a sophomore Theater major at Mercer University who hopes to pursue a career in film acting as well as theatre. His previous roles at Mercer include The Mad Hatter in *Alice in Wonderland*, Frederik Egerman in *A Little Night Music*, and Jupiter in *Ye Gods*. He is a huge fan of Shakespeare's work and has had the pleasure of portraying Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and Adrian in *The Tempest*. He thanks Scot Mann and Marian Zielinski for their hard work and dedication and his fellow cast members for making this show so enjoyable.

James McNichols (Light Board Operator) is a freshman Mechanical Engineering major. He is excited to be working on his first production at Mercer. He is also involved with the Mercer Robotics Club and can often be found wandering the halls of the engineering building.

Lindsey Mouchet (Shylock) has a B.A. in Theatre from Mercer University. She also studied at Valdosta State University and the Atlanta Alliance Theatre acting program. Lindsey is fortunate to have been under the tutelage of Dr. Randy Wheeler, Norma Richardson, BJ Hughes and Sharon Foote. Some of Lindsey's favorite roles include The Duchess in Scot Mann's adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* at Mercer University, Gwen in *The Royal Family* at the Alliance Summer Players, Sister Aloysius in *Doubt* at Valdosta State University and Annelie in *Steel Magnolias* with the Main Street Players. In 2008 Lindsey won Valdosta State University's Best Leading Female award for her work in *Holler Me Home*. She worked closely with the play's author Debra Fordham, an Emmy nominated writer for NBC's show *Scrubs*. The play later traveled to the Out of the Loop Festival at the Water Tower Theatre in Dallas, Texas. Lindsey is thrilled to be working with such a lovely cast and wonderful director. She would like to express her appreciation for all those who have given their time to make the show possible.

Alex Preston (Balthasar) is a double major in Theatre and Media Studies at Mercer, and this is his second Mercer Theatre production. Alex portrayed 2-Card in *Alice In Wonderland*, and designed lights for three shows last season: *The Colored Museum*, *The Rain In Spain* and the vignette entitled *Risen* from Kyle Shook's *Ye Gods*. He was the president of MERCER99 for the past two academic years, and worked as a Media Technician for three years in the Mercer Marketing Communications department. He is currently the Marketing Director for QuadWorks and holds a position in the Marketing department at the Grand Opera House. Alex is an active member of Mercer Players, QuadWorks, MERCER99, Mercer Cheer and the Society for Collegiate Journalists, where he held the position of interim president this past summer. He thanks his family and his boyfriend for their constant and unwavering support. Alex is a dancer of eighteen years, and dreams of becoming a dancer on Broadway.

Sean Rayburn (Lorenzo) is a senior English major from Newnan, GA, and he is terribly excited to be a part of this show. Though this is not his first production, this is his first time working with Shakespeare on-stage, and as an English major with a highly developed sense of nerdiness, he is kind of pumped. When he's not reading, in the classroom, or watching the English Premier league, Sean is usually working on something or another for Mercer Players, Sigma Tau Delta, The Dulcimer, or one of the other campus organizations of which he is a part. Sean

would like to express how exceptionally rad working with this cast has been, and that he has enjoyed the time spent backstage with his many friends from Mercer Players. Sean would also like to congratulate his roommate Patrick Hamilton and his good friend Brittani Howell on their first performance at Mercer to thank his friends and family for their support.

Sarah Beth (SB) Roach (Assistant Stage Manager) is a junior Accounting major, Psychology minor at Mercer University. SB has enjoyed performing her entire life, but has decided to explore an unfamiliar territory known as the backstage. She hopes to make her fellow crew and cast members proud.

Larry E. Ross (Old Gobo) is an alumnus from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, LA. He is a Theatre major at Mercer University. His favorite roles include Wilbur from *Charlotte's Web: The Musical*, Dr. Christian in *Government Inspector*, and Bob Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol: The Musical*. He thanks Wm. Perry Morgan-Hall, friends, and family for their support and for always pushing him to strive for his dreams. He would also like to thank the cast and crew for giving him a wonderful welcome and start to Mercer Theatre.

Suzanne Stroup (Portia) is a senior Theatre and Journalism major from Marietta. She was last seen in Back Door Theatre in the ensemble cast of the *Rain in Spain*, and portrayed Petra in *A Little Night Music* at the Grand Opera House last April. She has also been seen recently in *Ye Gods*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. She is president of the Mercer Players and of the Mercer Alliance for Reproductive Freedom, as well as a staff writer for The Cluster. Suzanne would like to thank her friends and family for their constant love and the support as well as the cast and crew for making the process super fun!

Kate Thomas (Crew) is a freshman planning to study Engineering. This is her first time working backstage, but she was a part of her high school's show *Xanadu* playing in the pit orchestra. She hopes that she can continue working for the theatre for the rest of her college career.

Marian Zielinski (Set and Lighting Designer) is a Professor of Theatre and Designer at Mercer University. In addition to designing environments and lighting for theatre productions, Marian has written and presented conference papers on the arts in Germany, Japan, Denmark, Italy, Sweden, Poland, British Columbia, and Great Britain. She is also an award-winning, nationally recognized fiber artist, an avid swimmer, and a painter who lives in Macon with her husband, Dr. Frank Macke and two cats, Panda and Yo-Yo. She dedicates this work to Frank for his love and inspiration.



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