

PRESENTING AN
OUTDOOR SPECTACULAR
CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

THE PHOENIX PROJECT: RENEWAL

APRIL 24 AT 7:30 PM
ON CRUZ PLAZA

MERCER
THEATRE

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The Phoenix Project is inspired by the societal upheaval of 2020 to ask what innovations and creativity will rise from the ashes, much like the mythical bird of its title. This is an original work generated by Scot Mann and collaboratively by Mercer Theatre students, faculty/staff, and the greater Middle Georgia community (and beyond) that takes place live outdoors in a parade-like environment. The last part of the crew is you.

BIOGRAPHIES



Imira Ackerson
Trickster Puppeteer

Imira Ackerson is a sophomore Psychology Pre-Med major and Theatre minor at Mercer University. This is her third production with Mercer Theatre and she is excited to be back on stage with her friends.



Logan Best
Fire Performer

Logan Best wants to thank the Mercer Players and Mercer Theatre for this wonderful opportunity. It has been so much fun, and will be an amazing experience for everyone who comes to watch.



Beth Brandon
Scenic Designer/ Fire Performer

Beth Brandon is a graduating senior at Mercer University. She has worked in the program as a scenic designer and scenic artist over this last year. She hopes everyone enjoys the show and has a great summer!

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Jacob Brackett

Trilogy Body

Jacob Brackett is a freshman at Mercer University and is a Psychology major. This is Jacob's second show with Mercer University. He sends his sincerest thanks out to both all who attend the show and to the Mercer University Theatre for this opportunity.



Bethany Buck

Hannah's puppeteer

This is Bethany's first show with Mercer, but she can frequently be found on or backstage at Theatre Macon. Hannah is new to Macon, relocated from the Amazon Prime Warehouse and is a regular greeter at Centenary Church. They are excited to participate in this experience!



Dianne Buck

Puppeteer of Minerva

Dianne is an Account Manager with Church Mutual Insurance Company and an active member of Centenary Church. This will be her first theatrical production as a puppeteer. Dianne is excited to be a part of The Phoenix Project: Renewal, thanks Scot Mann.



Derrick Buie

Trickster Puppeteer

Derrick is a sophomore Theatre and Biology double major at Mercer University. This is his first in person show since last year, and he wants to thank Scot for teaching him how to spin fire and for giving him the opportunity to share this amazing story with the Mercer Community. Derrick thanks his friends and family for all their love and support!!



Angelina Christine

Stilt Walker

Angelina is a sophomore Theatre and English double major. She has enjoyed learning fun circus skills over the past couple months and is grateful for the opportunities Mercer Theatre has presented her with. Shout out to her boyfriend for supporting and spotting her during her training.

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Craig Coleman

Projectionist

Craig Coleman is an artist who works in photography, installation, and digital media. He is a Professor of Art and Chair of the Art Department and has been teaching at Mercer for 17 years. He has been working with light and projection since the early 1990s.



Jackson Crean

Scene Shop Worker

Jackson Crean is a junior History major and Psychology minor at Mercer University. He has worked at the Mercer Players scene shop for 3 years, and is honored to have worked on one of the most unique shows he has ever been involved in. Enjoy the show!



Camila da Silva

Fire Crew

Camila da Silva is a Sophomore Psychology major on the Pre-Nursing track. This is her first show with the Mercer Theatre, and she is happy that she had the opportunity to work with such an amazing group of people. Congrats to the cast and crew for such an amazing production!!



Baylor Elliott

The Wise One Puppeteer

Baylor Elliott is an alumnus of Mercer University. He has been involved with Mercer Theatre for five years and can't wait for what the upcoming season will have in store. Sending all his love to his girlfriend, biggest supporter and love of his life Sarah Weeks. I love you baby.



Janiah Glanton

Trinity Puppeteer

Janiah Glanton wants to thank all of the people who have supported them through this project- you know who you are, and I couldn't have done it without you.

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Eugenia Gonzales

Stilt and Fire Artist

Eugenia Gonzales is an Atlanta based Actor, Model, Fire Artist, and Stilt walker. She has appeared in Legends and Lies and The Vampire Diaries, and through the southeast as a performance artist.



Lauryn Green

Special Effects/ Lighting

Lauryn Green is a freshman and plans on majoring in Media Studies with a double minor in Creative Writing and Business Entrepreneurship. This is her second performance at Mercer, and she is very excited about this show! She hopes to continue working with the amazing cast and crew in the future.



Jake Guinn

Fire Sword Performer

Jake Guinn is an actor/ fight director/ stunt performer from Atlanta. He is excited about joining the Mercer Players during their performance of The Phoenix Project: Renewal.



Genevieve (Gen) Haskins.

Trinity Puppeteer

Gen is a Holistic Child major with a Theatre minor. She did dance and theatre throughout her life, but this is her first production with Mercer Theatre! She is very excited to share the story of the Phoenix with you, and thanks her teachers and her father for supporting her.



Evie Hufstetler

Water Panther Puppeteer

Evie Hufstetler is a freshman planning to double major in Theater and Psychology. This is her first show with Mercer Theater and is very excited for the future works that Mercer Theater has planned. She wants to thank Scot for teaching her how to use a bull whip!

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Amanda Johnson

Assistant Puppet Designer

Amanda Johnson is a Theater Major at Wesleyan College and Mercer University. She has been involved in theater for her entire college career. This exciting new opportunity at Mercer has broadened her horizons, and she thanks her professors for presenting such a unique opportunity to grow in theatrical design.



Gordon Johnston

Poet of the Fire Song

Gordon Johnston has written two books of poems, *Scaring the Bears* and *Durable Goods*, and co-written a guide to Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park. He has taught literature, creative writing, backpacking, and kayaking at Mercer for 25 years and is thrilled to have been involved in the Phoenix Project.



Joey Kene

Fire Performer

Joey is a sophomore Neuroscience major. This is her third show with the Mercer Theatre department, and she wants to thank Scot for teaching her to twirl fire. She is really excited for the show, and hopes everyone appreciates the effort the cast has put in. She's glad you enjoyed the show!



Tripp Kennon

Trilogy Puppeteer/ Fire Whip

Tripp is a Junior studying PPE, a member of Sigma Nu, and a continuous actor for Mercer Players. He wants to thank his parents, Ben and Wendy, for being his biggest fans and tireless supporters. He also wants to thank Mercer Theatre, Scot, and Frani, for the amazing opportunities they provide him.



Shelley Kuhlen

Phoenix Puppet Designer

Shelley joined Mercer Theatre's creative team as costume designer and costume shop supervisor in the fall of 1996. In the past 18 years she has designed over 70 productions for The Mercer Players as well as over 30 productions for Mercer Opera. She has also been the costume designer/shop supervisor for Theatre Macon since 1988.

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Austin Kidd

Phoenix Puppeteer

Austin Kidd is a Junior Biology major and ROTC student. As a Theatre Minor, Austin participates with the Mercer Players whenever he finds the time and has a blast while doing so. Austin would like to thank his Theatre Professors and fellow Theatre students and performers for being great friends and providing an outlet during very busy times.



Arden Latham

Trickster Puppeteer

Arden Latham is a sophomore Biology and English double major at Mercer University. She enjoys theatre, music, and stepping on people's toes as politely as possible. Arden would like to thank the cast and crew, as well as her family and friends, for enduring her behavior.



Pilar Lowden

Hayiya Dance Theatre Director/ Choreographer and Fire Performer

This is Pilar's first performance with Mercer Theatre and she is excited about being able to share this experience with Hayiya Dance Theatre. Thanks go out to her friends and family who have supported her work on this production.



Scot J. Mann

Deviser

Scot J. Mann is the Director of Mercer Theatre, a Fight Master with the Society of American Fight Directors. He is thrilled with the dedication and artistry that came together to create The Phoenix Project: Renewal. Thanks to all!



Rudy Mendez

Water Panther Puppeteer

Rudy Mendes is a local visual artist who lives in the Tatnall Heights Community. He loves puppetry and he appreciates the opportunity to work with Mercer's cast and crew.

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Martin Noyes
Mas Malo Puppeteer

Martin Noyes works as an actor, teacher and fight director. He is a Certified Teacher in the art of Stage Combat through the Society of American Fight Directors and has been fight directing for 32 years. Martin Noyes is the founder and CEO of ADVENTURE THEATER LLC.



James Ogden
Technical Director/ Water Panther and Trilogy Designer

James is in his first year at Merer University and couldn't be more excited about making his debut with this show. Thank you to his family for supporting him on this project and through his many escapades with horticulture.



Chas Pridgen
Fire Lead

Chas Pridgen is a recent Mercer Theatre graduate. His recent roles include the Emcee in "Cabaret" Daryl in "Bright Star." Chas would like to thank Scot and Frani for letting him be a part of this fantastical production!



Laura Ashlyn Pridgen
Water Panther Puppeteer

Laura Ashlyn is a Junior Theatre and Psychology double major at Mercer University. You may have seen her in "Romeo and Juliet" and "Evil Dead: The Musical". She is very excited to be a part of such a unique production and hopes you enjoy the show!



Celinna Riordan
Assistant Stage Manager

Celinna A. Riordan (21) is a junior at Mercer University and has had the honor of being able to stage manage for the Phoenix Project: Renewal this semester. She is so proud of everyone's effort and dedication to putting this show together despite all the limitations and difficulties of COVID and campus life, and hope you enjoy the show!

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Frani Rollins

SFX/ Trickster Puppet Designer/ Management

Frani Rollins is the Assistant Professor of Design and Technology at Mercer University. She is excited about being able to share this experience with the larger Mercer community, and wants to thank the Mercer Players for all their hard work and commitment to their creative research.



Julia Rubens

Marketing and Promotions

Julia works between campus and downtown for a variety of vibrant arts organizations as the Director of Arts Marketing for Mercer University. She's on the boards of Storytellers Macon, Macon Little Theatre, and the Downtown Macon Community Association. In her free time, you'll find her with two high-energy pups and at Pure Barre.



Mary Sanon

Crew Member

Mary Sanon is a Mercer University student majoring in Psychology and a minoring in Communications. She always wanted to be a part of the theater family but never got a chance to due to her military obligations. She is excited to finally live one of her dreams with Mercer Theatre.



Zhauni (Z) Smith

Phoenix Puppeteer

This is Z's first production with Mercer Theatre, but she is looking forward to doing as much as she can with the Mercer Players in the future.



Russell S. Sorrow

Fire Artist

Russell S. Sorrow is the lucky husband of Ashley and father of Declan who spends most of his time fixing what is broken. He is honored to grace the field of battle with fellow thespians and breathe fire into the life of the show.

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Emma Steinhaus
Phoenix Puppeteer

Emma is a Junior Theater and Psychology double major at Mercer University. She has worked on various Mercer Theater productions throughout her time at Mercer and is excited to be a part of this show. She would like to thank the cast and crew for all of their hard work!



Anna Stephens
Fire Queen

Anna Stephens is a freshman at Mercer University. This is Anna's first year being involved with Mercer Theatre, and she could not be more excited to see what the next few years bring! Anna wants to thank her family for always supporting her. Go bears!



Drew Sutton
Wise One Puppet Designer

Drew Sutton works with Mercer Physical Plant. He has been humbled by the opportunity to work with the theatre department, which allows him to exercise his creativity. Always a strong supporter of the creative spirit of the theatre department, Drew is honored to finally get the opportunity to work with them. Curtailing sarcasm generally takes up most of his time so this has been a welcome change.



Charlie Vee
Composer

Charlie is a humble transient, working as an emt, playing as a writer and noise artist, attempting to forge aural alien malevolence and foreboding for the better part of 9 years. Honored to be given this opportunity to contribute to such potent and important magicks.



Jackie Vu
Assistant Stage Manager

Jackie Vu is a Senior Accounting major at Mercer University. This is his first-time assisting Mercer Theatre with a show, and he is grateful to have the opportunity to help!

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David Walker

Sound Designer and Technician

David Walker is ready for this show to be shared beyond rehearsals. Thanks to all of those who have shared in this process, and those who have supported the work we have done.



Amy Watson

Center Coordinator

Amy is the Center Coordinator at the Tattnell Square Center for the arts, the home of the Theatre Program. She is excited to see the hard work and commitment from this program shine center stage on Cruz Plaza. Go Bears!



Austin X

Voice Actor- Poem

Austin is an up-and-coming voice actor from Saskatchewan, Canada whose voice you can hear in the reading of the poem "Fire Bird". Although he cannot attend in person, he wishes everyone 'Break a Leg!' and hopes you enjoy the show.