

---

# Mercer University Theatre

Presents

## Private Eyes

by Steven Dietz

Directed by Paul Oppy  
Set Design by Sean Johnson  
Lighting Design by Marian Zielinski  
Sound Mix by Jason Teague  
Costumes Designed by Marian Zielinski

### ~CAST~

Matthew ..... Tony Pearson  
Lisa ..... Linda Reid  
Adrian ..... David Abney  
Cory ..... Kelly Foltz  
Frank ..... Jim Sisson

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

A Play in Two Acts with one 10-minute intermission

The Place: Various rooms in an American city.  
The Time: The present

### Playwright's Note

*Private Eyes* began as a lie. Seven years ago I was sitting in a hotel room in Louisville, KY, writing a scene in which two lovers fail to speak the truth. And, like a lie, the play grew. It began to go to greater and greater lengths to keep its own deceit afloat. It took my sense of structure for a ride and built a web of such complexity that clarity (aka "truth") was rendered virtually impossible. And even now, years later, sitting in a hotel room in Tucson, I think back to that first scene and say to myself: it started so simply. Doesn't it always.

I have a friend who assures me that he is incapable of jealousy. He has convinced his wife of this fact. I admire him for this. I envy him this. And I don't -- in my heart's heart -- believe him for a minute. Jealousy is part of love's arsenal, with suspicion as its fuse. And though I agree with Camu's adage that "no man has ever dared describe himself as he is" - I have tried to write about my own fascination with the high-wire act known as "an affair": the insidious power of suspicion, the delicious fever of deception . . . and the accompanying sobriety of truth. For beneath the headlines of our heartache lies something quieter, simpler: the fear of loss. The failure of love to answer its own promise. The low-level panic of two people, alone, looking in each other's eyes, with nowhere to run. Nothing between them but distance. Nothing awaiting them but time.

A play about lies must be a comedy, because only laughter can make us recognize truths that we're not fond of. Only laughter is generous enough to hear us out, to listen to our foibles and our familiar debacles . . . and let us think that next time, next time, it will be different. Thanks for taking the ride.

Steven Dietz  
5 April 96

---

### ~Who's Who~

**Steven Dietz** (Playwright) has written plays that have been seen at over eighty regional theatres across the country as well as Off-Broadway. His plays include *Lonely Planet*, *God's Country*, *Trust*, *Handing Down the Names*, *Happenstance*, *Boomtown*, *Ten November*, *Foolin' Around with Infinity*, *Painting it Red*, and *More Fun Than Bowling*. *Lonely Planet* won the 1994 PEN Center USA West Award in Playwriting, and played in Los Angeles at the Fountain Theatre. The Off-Broadway production of his play, *Trust*, was named one of the Top Ten Plays of 1995 by New York's *Backstage*. In addition to over 100 productions in the United States, *God's Country*, Mr. Dietz's play about the white supremacist movement, was also seen in Pretoria and Johannesburg, South Africa. His recent works include *Private Eyes*, which premiered at the Arizona Theatre Company; *Still Life with Iris*, written for the Seattle Children's Theater; and *The Nina Variations*.

**David Abney** (Adrian) has appeared on the Mercer stage in the role of Bruce in *Beyond Therapy*, and as Mr. Drumm in last Fall's production of *Da*. Dave, a Cartersville High graduate, will graduate from Mercer with honors in May. He plans to attend law school at the University of Kentucky College of Law next Fall. Dave would like to thank his family for their support over the past four years.

**William Abney** (Stage Manager) is working on his 1st production with Mercer Theatre. He is a Sophomore majoring in History, Biology, and Latin. Will is happy to be a part of the theatre for this production and would like to extend thanks to the cast and crew. He is pleased to take some of the burden from Paul and to offer all the assistance he can. Will would also like to thank his parents for their support [and Mercer for their money] and patience.

**Ansley Buck** (Assistant Stage Manager/Photographer) is a sophomore from Columbus, GA, working toward a triple major in Political Science, Sociology, and Criminal Justice. After graduating, she hopes to attend law school and graduate school in Criminal Justice at Rutgers University. She has enjoyed working with such a great cast.

**Diana Davidson** (Assistant Stage Manager/Photographer/Set Crew) is a Freshman majoring in Early Childhood Education at Mercer. Diana recently appeared in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* as Honey. She also performed in *The Actor's Nightmare* by Christopher Durang at Statesboro High School. Diana has thoroughly enjoyed Mercer Theatre and is looking forward to participating in as many productions as possible.

**Kelly Foltz** (Cory) hails from Panama City Beach, FL. She is a Junior majoring in English. Kelly worked as Stage Manager in *Sweeney Todd*, Assistant Stage Manager in *Beyond Therapy*, and the role of woman in *Sharon's Grave*. She would like to thank Paul Oppy, the cast and crew for making a big dream come true. Kelly dedicates this performance to the CTA department, her family, and friends.

**Adam Gsegner** (Assistant Stage Manager/Photographer) is a Freshman majoring in Communication and Theatre Arts. This past semester Adam worked as Assistant Stage Manager for *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* He also appeared as Oliver in *Da*. Adam hopes to do many more productions with the Mercer Theatre.

**Sean Johnson** (Set Designer), graduated from Marian College in Indianapolis with a B.A. in Theatre Arts. He is presently the Technical Director for the Mercer University Department of Communication and Theatre Arts and Production Coordinator for the Grand Opera House. You may have seen some of his work in Theater Macon's *Flyin' West*. Sean's other design credits include *Sweeney Todd* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* here at Mercer.

**Brooke Kaiser** (Assistant Stage Manager/Photographer/Set Crew) is a Freshman majoring in Theatre, English, Spanish, and German. Brooke received an Excellent for her performance in One-Act at Florida State Thespian Conference (DeLand High School). She worked as Assistant Stage Manager in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and as House Manager in *Da* here at Mercer. Brooke's future ambition is to either become a famous actress or work for the CIA. She is designing her own major and plans to go to law school to get her Juris Doctor or continue in theatre and get an MFA.

**Stephanie McLaurin** (ASM/Photographer/Set Crew) is a Freshman at Mercer majoring in Chemistry and Biology. This is Stephanie's first theatrical experience and she is very excited about working with such a great cast and crew. She hopes to become very involved with the theatre while here at Mercer.

**Paul Oppy** (Director) has been teaching and directing theatre at Mercer for twenty-six years. *Private Eyes* is the 73rd production he has directed for Mercer University Theatre. He is excited to be serving as the Artistic Director of the Georgia International Festival for Young Audiences, which will have its premiere in Macon, Georgia in May 1998.

**Tony Pearson** (Matthew/Sound) is a senior from Statesboro, GA, with a Drama-Theatre concentration. Tony's credits with the Mercer theatre include the role of Peadar Minogue in *Sharon's Grave*, *Clindor/Calisto/Theogenes* in *The Illusion*, and set design for last Fall's production of *Da*. After graduation Tony is hoping to find a job as a scenic designer, not a burger flipper. He hopes to pursue a master's degree in scenic design.

**Stephanie Reavis** (Assistant Stage Manager/Photographer/Set Crew) is a developing Senior majoring in English and Art and is interested in pursuing a writing career upon graduating from Mercer. Theatre is one of her main interests, as are music and the visual arts. Stephanie appeared in last Spring's production of *Sweeney Todd* as a towns person and also worked as an Assistant Stage Manager in *Da*.

**Linda Lee Reid** (Lisa) has a MFA in Acting and Directing from the University of Arizona and a B.S. in History and Theatre from Georgia College. Linda played the part of Claucoatl in Arizona Theatre Company's production of *La Malinche* and the role of Joan of Arc in Arizona Repertory's Company of *Touring Shakespeare*. Linda is excited about her first appearance here at Mercer. She has been a professional actress and singer for eight years and is also a member of the Screen Actors Guild. She dedicates this performance to her sisters and brother who are finally close enough to see her perform.

**Jim Sisson** (Frank) is a Senior at Mercer majoring in English. He teaches drama to 5-7 year olds at First Street Arts where has worked since his Freshman year. Jim will attend the Mercer School of Theology in the Fall.

**Ashley Whitten** (Assistant Stage Manager/Photographer) is a Sophomore majoring in Communication and Theatre Arts with a concentration in Drama/Theatre and a minor in English. Ashley's credits include Light Board Operator for Mercer Opera's *Gianni Schicci*, Stage Manager for *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, and the roles of birdseller and chorus in *Sweeney Todd*. Ashley plans on teaching Theatre and English at a High School level in the future.

**Marian Zielinski** (Costume & Light Design) is an Associate Professor, Designer, and the Chair of the Communication and Theatre Arts Department at Mercer University. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Theatre from the University of Buffalo and a Master of Fine Arts Degree from Illinois State. This is Marian's 16th season with Mercer University Theatre. She has also designed professionally for the Shawnee Summer Repertory Theatre and the Illinois Shakespeare Festival.

**PRODUCTION STAFF**

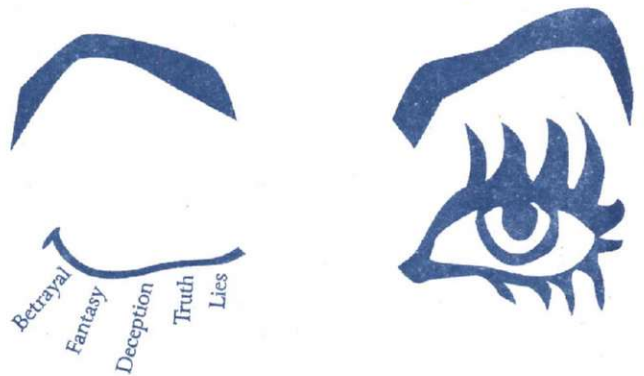
Director ..... Paul Oppy  
 Set Designer ..... Sean Johnson  
 Costume Designer ..... Marian Zielinski  
 Lighting Designer ..... Marian Zielinski  
 Sound Mix ..... Jason Teague  
 Stage Manager ..... William Abney  
 Assistant Stage Managers ..... Ashley Buck, Diana Davidson, Adam Gsegner,  
 Brooke Kaiser, Stephanie McLaurin, Stephanie Reavis, Ashley Whitten  
 Technical Director ..... Sean Johnson  
 Set Crew ..... David Abney, Benjamin Hulett,  
 Tammy Macaluso, Jud Martin, Tony Pearson,  
 John Sawyer, Marlene Silva, Whit Whitmore, Wade Williams  
 Costume Shop Supervisor ..... Shelley Kuhlen  
 Electrics Crew ..... Barbara Brocks, Margaret Eugenio, Brenda McCann  
 Light Board Operator ..... Brenda McCann  
 Sound Board Operator ..... Adam Gsegner  
 House Manager ..... Benjamin Hulett  
 Ushers ..... The Mercer Players

**SPECIAL THANKS** to Denver Pickard, Jerry mittelhauser and Theatre Macon

# Mercer University Theatre

Steven Dietz's *Comedy of Suspicion*

# Private Eyes



*Directed by Paul Oppy*

**The Backdoor Theatre**

Feb. 8 - 15

*A Presentation of the Contemporary American Theatre Festival*