

THE *BARD* MEETS THE *BLACK* EXPERIENCE



HAMLET

2020

TATNALL SQUARE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

October 2021

HAMLET 2020

The Bard meets the Black Experience. Alumnus Charles Thomas returns to the Mercer stage with a concept born of the racial justice movement. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark, and young prince Hamlet can't stop himself from speaking truth to power. True to the language of the Bard, this work boldly envisions the original story through BIPOC eyes and 2020 vision.

CAST

Hamlet	Imira Ackerson
Horatio	Janhavi Kulkarni
Ophelia	Caylyn Kelly*
Laertes	Olivia Scott
Polonius	Celinna Riordan*
Claudius	Luke Walker
Gertrude	Nyah Morah*
Hamlet's Ghost/Lucianus	Derrick Buie*
Rosencrantz	Genevieve Haskins*
Guildestern	Lara Smith*
First Player/Player King	Lauryn Green
Player Queen/Lord	Shayla Swanson
Gravedigger 1/Marcellus	Angelina Christine*
Gravedigger 2/Osric	Colleen Reed
Players (ensemble)	Josie Arbaugh, Madison Langton*, Taylor Goodly, Anna Stephens, Angelina Christine*, Colleen Reed
Security Guard/Sailor/Priest	Josie Arbaugh
Renaldo	Anna Stephens
Bernardo	Taylor Goodly
Francisco/Prologue	Madison Langton*

BIOGRAPHIES



Imira Ackerson (Hamlet) is a Junior Psychology major and Theatre minor at Mercer University. This is her fourth production with the Mercer Theatre and she is excited to be back on stage with her friends!



Josie Arbaugh (Security Guard, Player, Priest) is a sophomore Neuroscience major and Women and Gender Studies minor. This is Josie's first play, and she is so excited to be a part of Mercer Theatre! Josie has had so much fun rehearsing and getting to know the cast and crew.



Derrick Buie (The Ghost) is a junior biology and theatre double major at Mercer University. You may have seen him most recently in Mercer's production of Pinocchio. Derrick would like to thank his friends, family, and fellow cast mates for all the love a support, and Charlie for giving him the opportunity to take part in this amazing production.

Elaine Busby (Sound Operator) is excited about being part of this production. Thank you to the cast and crew for making this show great!



Angelina Christine (Marcellus, Player, Gravedigger) is a junior English major and Theatre minor at Mercer University. She is so excited to finally perform live theatre again and would like to thank you all for coming out and supporting this show.

Micaela Dacanay (Props Designer) is happy to share this production with you. Thank you to the cast, the crew, and all who supported this production.



Gabi Fox (Light Board Operator) is from Columbus, GA, and she is a 1st-year student majoring in Public Health. She enjoys musicals, reading, and playing with her dog. This is her first time helping on a technical theatre crew and she hopes you enjoy the show!



Taylor Goodly (Bernardo, Player) is a freshman at Mercer University. While in high school, Taylor performed in Alice in Wonderland, Schoolhouse Rock, Into the Woods, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, and many more. She plans to pursue a degree in Psychology with a minor in Theatre.



Hannah Gray (Assistant Stage Manager/ Assistant Scenic Designer) is a native of Marietta, Georgia, and is pursuing an early education degree at Mercer University. She has almost a dozen years of theater experience onstage and behind it and her most recent accomplishment was serving as assistant stage manager on a Strand Theater Production.

Sophia Gratigny (Run Crew) wants to thank the cast and crew for working so hard on making this show happen. Hope you enjoy the show!



Lauryn Green (Player King) is a sophomore at Mercer University. She is excited to be a part of this production and wants to thank her friends and family for their support!



Gen Haskins (Rosencrantz) is a Holistic Child major with a Theatre minor. She did dance and theatre throughout her life, and this is her third production with Mercer Theatre! She is very excited to share this interpretation of Hamlet with you, and thanks her teachers and her father for supporting her.



Caylyn Kelly (Ophelia) is a freshman at Mercer University! You might've seen her as Pantalone in Mercer Theatre's production of Commedia Pinocchio! She would love to thank her family and friends for their support! Caylyn is ecstatic to be playing Ophelia in Hamlet 2020 and hopes you enjoy the show!



Tori Kershaw (Stage Manager) is a freshman Education major and Theatre minor at Mercer University. She is excited to have this opportunity and looks forward to future productions with Mercer Players. Tori would like to thank her family, Rob Fields, and Emma Steinhaus for their support.



Shelley Kuhlen (Costume Design) is a member of the Mercer Theatre staff. They would like to thank the cast, the crew, student workers, and the students and volunteers that helped make this show happen.



Janhavi Kulkarni (Horatio) is a freshman Psychology major. Janhavi has danced throughout her life and has always had a deep love for theater. This is her first production at Mercer University, and she is extremely excited to be a part of Mercer Theater. Janhavi would like to thank all of the incredible cast and crew for their incredible work! Janhavi is very excited for everyone to see the show?



Madison Langton (Francisco, Player) is a freshman at Mercer University who is incredibly excited to be a part of Hamlet 2020. She would like to thank everyone for coming out and hopes they all enjoy the Hamlet 2020 experience!



Scot Mann (Fight Choreographer) is the Director of the Mercer Theatre Program. He would like to thank the actors for their dedication and commitment to this project and the entire Mercer Theatre family for their support on this project.



Nyah Morah (Gertrude) is a Freshman Psychology Major and Theatre Minor at Mercer University. They have been active as an actor for 8 years, and Hamlet 2020 is their second production with Mercer Theatre and 7th production in their acting career in general. They are extremely excited to perform once again in the greatest Shakespeare play of all time with a talented and diverse cast. They want to thank the director, the crew, and cast for all their hard work and hope you enjoy the performance!



James Ogden (Scenic Design) is a member of the Mercer Theatre faculty. They would like to thank the cast, crew, and student workers for their time and skill on this project.



Colleen Reed (Gravedigger Two/Osric) is a sophomore Biochemistry and Molecular Biology major. She is very excited to be making her debut with Mercer Theatre, as well as her first performance post-pandemic! Colleen is very grateful to her friends and family for all of their love and support.



Celinna A. Riordan (Polonius) is a Theatre/Mercer double major at Mercer University. This will be her last show before graduating this winter, and she is very thankful to have been able to perform beside so many talented and wonderful people both in the cast and crew. She hopes you enjoy the show!



Frani Rollins (Lighting Design) is a member of the Mercer Theatre faculty. Thank you to the crew and cast for all their hard work and dedication to this project.



Olivia Scott (Laertes) is a freshman Journalism major with minors in Sociology and Political Science at Mercer University. Theatre is a true passion of hers and being able to come straight to Mercer and do theatre her first semester was so exciting. Working on Hamlet, with the support of the cast, crew, family and friends, has been an amazing experience for her, and it is something she will cherish forever.



Samantha Shadoff (Sound Designer) is a Freshman, and this is her 1st show here at Mercer as well as her first show as a sound designer. While she is more acquainted with musical performance, she has had so much fun working on the technical side of this production. She would like to thank her friends and family for supporting her and always being so amazing. She is so excited for you to see the show and hopes you enjoy!



Lara Smith (Guildenstern) is a sophomore Psychology major at Mercer University. You may have seen her most recently as 707 in Glitch. Lara would like to thank her friends and family for their love and support.



Emma Steinhaus (Assistant Stage Manager) is a Senior 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 (Player) is a sophomore Theatre and Creative Writing major. Anna had appeared as Old Lisa in “Z-4” and The Fire Queen in “Rise of the Phoenix,” and has helped as run crew for the Commedia Pinocchio! This is her first-time performing Shakespeare, and she is very excited! Anna would like to thank her family for believing in her and for supporting her always!!



Shayla Swanson (Player Queen and Lord) is a freshman Marketing major. She started theatre in high school and is excited to continue it at Mercer. This is her first play at Mercer University, and she is very excited. She is very proud of the hard work everyone put into this production.



Charlie Thomas (Director) is a Mercer Alumnus who is thrilled to be back as the director for this show, working with the Mercer Players in the new Tattnall Square Center for the Arts. He wants to thank everyone who has supported his vision and hopes that this performance sparks conversation and change.



Luke Walker (King Claudius) is a sophomore Psychology major. This is his first-time performing Shakespeare and he’s ready to show everyone how awesome the cast and crew have made this show. He’s thankful for the love and support from his family and friends and hopes they love the show.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE MERCER THEATRE PROGRAM CREW:

Office Administrator: Penni Hartley

Student Workers: Mo Baldwin, Jackson Crean, Mandy Johnson, Mokshitha Katoori,
Emma Steinhaus, Kevin White