

**MERCER UNIVERSITY THEATRE**  
**TATTNALL SQUARE CENTER FOR THE ARTS**

**MEN**

**ON**

**BOATS**

**BY JACLYN BACKHAUS**

**FEB 15-17, 22-24 7:30PM**  
**FEB 18 & 25 2:30PM**

# CAST

Powell	Olivia Scott
Dunn	Janhavi Kulkarni
Sumner	Lauryn Green
Old Shady	Kenlea Davis
Bradley	Lexi Scharf
O.G.	Taylor Shaw
Seneca	Shayla Swanson
Goodman	Madison Langton
Hall	Kate Zeumer
Hawkins	Laura Hiers
Just Jim	Taylor Goodly
Johnson	Jada Clements
Mr. Asa	Arden Latham

## SPECIAL NOTE:

Playwrights Horizons, Inc, and Clubbed Thumb produced  
MEN ON BOATS in New York City, 2016  
Intially developed and produced by Clubbed Thumb in 2015

# CREW/ DESIGN AND PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Scot Mann
Assistant Director/Choreographer	Madison Langton
Stage Manager	Tori Kershaw
Assistant Stage Manager	Danica Dilione
T.D./Scenic Designer	James Ogden
Light Designer	Frani Rollins
Costume Designer	Shelley Kuhen
Wardrobe	Roni Yitzchaki
Sound Designer	Hillary Kwarteng
Sound Technician	Sami Shadoff
Prop Designer	Allie Hodges
Props Assistants	Evie Hufstetler
	Gen Haskins
Administrative Specialist	Penni Hartley
Dramaturgy	Jacob Brackett
Head Run Crew	Hannah Gray
Run Crew	Ella Brumbelow
	Gen Haskins
House Manager	Luke Walker
Sound Board Operator	
Light Board Operator	Brielle McLean



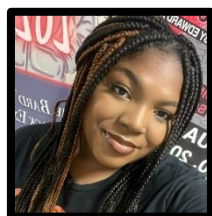
# CAST & CREW



**Jacob Brackett** (Dramaturg) is a recent Mercer University alumni excited for the opportunity to still contribute to Mercer Theatre. Jacob has appeared in previous Mercer theatre productions including “The Goat (Or, ‘Who Is Sylvia?’),” “A Divine Kerfuffle,” “Eurydice,” as well as others. Jacob would like to send a special thank you to his parents.



**Ella Brumbelow** (Run Crew) is a junior here at Mercer University and is majoring in psychology as well as minoring in theatre and marketing. She is very excited to be a part of this show.



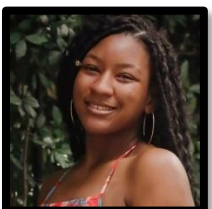
**Jada Clements** (Johnson) is a freshman Political Science and Psychology major. Jada has always been passionate about the fine arts, especially the acting aspect of it. This is her first year being a part of Mercer's theater program, and she looks forward to being involved in the years to come. Jada would like to thank all that have supported her in the past and now.



**Kenlea Davis** (Old Shady) is a sophomore southern studies major at Mercer University. This is her second show with the Mercer Players, and she is excited to be a part of this production as well as more in the future. She would like to thank her friends and family for their love and support.



**Danica Dilione** (Assistant Stage Manager) is a theatre and media studies double major. She has been involved in theatre ever since she was a little kid, but this is her first time taking on a tech position! She has loved this opportunity and thanks Tori for all her help and support throughout this time. She would also like to thank all the cast and crew for helping make “Men on Boats” happen and hopes you enjoy the show!



**Taylor Goodly (Just Jim)** is a junior majoring in psychology and minoring in theatre at Mercer University. She has worked on “Hamlet 2020” and “Twelve Angry Jurors”, previous Mercer Theatre productions. Taylor has also been a part of the props crew for “Eurydice” and wardrobe for “Premier Performances”. She is very excited to be a part of this production!



**Hannah Gray** (Head Run Crew) is a native of Marietta, Georgia pursuing an elementary education degree at Mercer University. She has almost a dozen years of theatre experience, both onstage and behind it, and her most significant accomplishment was serving as the stage manager on a Strand Theatre Production. She has been a crew member in several Mercer Player productions and is proud to add “Men on Boats” to that list!



**Lauryn Green** (Lenny/Reporter #1) is a senior Media Studies major and a Creative Writing and Entrepreneurship double minor at Mercer University. Lauryn has enjoyed working on Mercer’s “Hamlet 2020”, “The Goat (Or, ‘Who Is Sylvia?’)”, “Eurydice”, “Mercer Haunts”, “Phoenix”, “Twelve Angry Jurors”, “The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical” and “Alice in Wonderland”. She looks forward to future productions with Mercer Players. Lauryn would like to thank her family for their continued support.



**Penni Hartley** (Administrative Assistant/Poster Art) is a Mercer Alumni with a B.A. in Art and Photography and is the Center Coordinator for Tattnall Square Center for the Arts, Art and Mathematics Departments, and the McEachern Art Gallery.



**Gen Haskins** (Craftsperson/Crew) is a Holistic Child major with a Theatre minor. Her previous Mercer Theatre credits include Assistant Stage Manager for “12 Angry Jurors” and Ensemble for “The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical!” She is very excited to share this interpretation of “Men on Boats” with you, and thanks her friends and family for supporting her.



**Laura Hiers** (Hawkins) is a sophomore education major at Mercer University. She is so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of a show with such an amazing cast and crew. She would like to thank everyone involved for their support.



**Allie Hodges** (Prop Designer) is a sophomore theatre major and props designer for “Men on Boats.” This is her second production, and she would like to thank her prop makers for all of their hard work.



**Evie Hufstetler** (Assistant Props, Assistant Costume) is a senior music and theatre double major at Mercer University. She has worked on various Mercer Theatre productions. She would like to thank the cast and crew for all their hard work.



**Tori Kershaw** (Stage Manager) is a junior Elementary/Special Education and Theatre major at Mercer University. Tori has been involved in all of Mercer's productions for the past few years and has especially enjoyed working as the Stage Manager on Mercer's "Hamlet 2020", "Eurydice", "Mercer Haunts", "12 Angry Jurors", and "Alice in Wonderland". Tori would like to thank her family, the props team, the theatre faculty and Danica Dilione for their continued support.



**Shelley Kuhen** (Costume Director/Costume Shop Supervisor) has been Mercer Theatre's Costume Director for 27 seasons. She designs the costumes and manages the costume shop as well. She wants to thank her family for their love and understanding as they have supported her through many crazy endeavors. She also thanks her costume shop crew for their countless hours of hard work and for their encouragement, love, and laughter.



**Janhavi Kulkarni (Dunn)** is a junior psychology major with a minor in Spanish and business administration. Janhavi has been a part of several Mercer Theatre productions, including "Hamlet 2020", "Eurydice", "Mercer Haunts", "12 Angry Jurors", and "The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical!". Like always, she has enjoyed bringing this play to life and working with her amazing cast and crew members. She hopes that everyone will enjoy this play just as much as she does and looks forward to future Mercer Theatre productions!



**Hillary Kwarteng** (Sound Designer) is a senior Psychology and ART double major at Mercer University. Hillary has enjoyed working on Mercer's "Pinocchio", "The Goat (Or 'Who Is Sylvia?')", "Eurydice", "Premiere Performances", "Mercer Haunts", "Alice in Wonderland" and "Divine Kerfuffle" and looks forward to future productions with Mercer Players. Hillary would like to thank her family and friends for their continued support.



**Madison Langton (Goodman)** is a Junior Accounting Major whose been a part of many Mercer Theater shows. A huge shout out to the amazing cast and crew that put this show together!



**Arden Latham** (Mock Turtle) is a senior English Pre-Law major at Mercer University. She has performed in several shows with the Mercer Players and is thrilled to return for her final theater season. She would like to thank her beloved friends and family members for their support and encouragement.



**Brielle McLean** (Light Board Operator) is a sophomore marketing major with a minor in theatre. This is her first play at Mercer University and she is excited to participate in more in the future with Mercer Players. Brielle would like to thank her family, friends, and the whole cast and crew for their encouragement.



**Scot Mann** (Director) is a professor of Acting and Directing in the Mercer Theatre Program and a Fight Master with the Society of American Fight Directors. 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.



**James Ogden** (Technical Director/Scenic Designer) 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.



**Frani Rollins** (Technical Supervisor) is the Program Director for Mercer Theatre and an Associate Professor of Design and Technology with the Mercer University Theatre Department. She would like to thank the Mercer Players, the Mercer Theater Program, and her family for being awesome, supportive, and inspiring people.



**Lexi Scharf** (Bradley) is a sophomore theatre and psychology double major. She has loved working on this play and is looking forward to future productions with the players. She would love to thank the cast and crew for their endless support. erta) is a sophomore English and Psychology double major with a theatre minor. She has loved working on this play and is looking forward to future productions with the players. She would love to thank the cast and crew for their endless support.



**Sami Shadoff** (Sound Technician) is a junior marketing major with minors in economics and theatre. This is her sixth time working on a show for Mercer Theatre and she will be the Sound Technician. She is looking forward to working with sound again for such a fun show. 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!



**Olivia Scott Powell** is a senior journalism major with minors in sociology and political science. She has worked on various theatre productions throughout her time at Mercer such as “12 Angry Jurors”, “Hamlet 2020”, and “Premier Performances”. She is so excited to show you guys the amazing show that the cast and crew has put together!



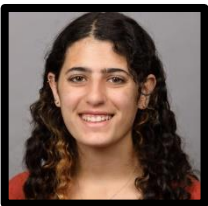
**Taylor Shaw** (O.G.) is a junior computer science major, cybersecurity minor, and theatre minor at Mercer University. Taylor has enjoyed working crew on several of Mercer’s productions with this one being Taylor’s acting debut and looks forward to future productions with Mercer Players. Taylor hopes you enjoy the show and thanks everyone involved for their hard work and support.



**Shayla Swanson** (Seneca) is a Junior Marketing and Management double major at Mercer University. She has been in multiple Mercer Theatre productions like “Hamlet 2020”, “Premier Performances”, “Mercer Haunts”, “Alice in Wonderland” and “Divine Kerfuffle”. She is excited to be a part of this show and would like to thank the cast and crew for all of their hard work. She hopes everyone enjoys the show!



**Luke Walker** (House Manager) is a senior psychology major at Mercer University and has worked on various Mercer Theatre productions throughout his time at Mercer. He is happy to be able to be a part of this production and would like to thank the cast and crew for making an amazing show.



**Roni Yitzchaki** (Wardrobe) is a senior civil engineering major at Mercer University. She has enjoyed working on various Mercer Theatre 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 their hard work.



**Kate Zeumer (Hall)** is a junior english major and theatre minor. She has previously appeared in “Eurydice” as Gravestone, Kimberly in “Mercer Haunts”, and Silena in “The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical!”. She would like to thank the cast and crew for their dedication in making this fantastic production come to life!



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# Dramaturgy Note and Land Acknowledgement

According to playwright Jaclyn Backhaus, part of the privilege of theater is its ability to address whose stories are told by who.

“Men on Boats” is a daring play that certainly features boats, and very intentionally does not feature men. The project began as Backhaus having the desire to write a play of high physicality, survival, and adventure. Quickly within the process of writing the show, the playwright identified a pressing concern: there wasn’t a place for someone like herself in her piece. The entire project was then flipped on its head, calling for every role in the production to be portrayed by as diverse a group of female-identifying people as possible.

A key reason the playwright gave for her casting instructions was part of the theater’s functionality. While the show depicts actual historical events, the casting decisions make the show a non-historical portrayal, as the crew members are not showcased physically as they actually existed. The show intends not to recite or reenact history, but to tell a story. The idea that cis-men are the superior group has had significant effects on not only how stories get told but also who is allowed to have their story told. A major intent of the show is to take the core of the spirit of adventure and allow for it to be told through the people never allowed to tell it. The decision to emphasize race and gender diversity is not haphazard; it is a very intentional and good-willed artistic expression.

This play follows the events of the 1869 Powell Expedition. John Wesley Powell, a former Civil War Captain and professor, was contracted by the President Ulysses S. Grant to navigate and map the river that cuts through the Grand Canyon. While Westward Expansion already had mapped a majority of the land, the expedition would mark the first government sanctioned documentation of the dangerous river passage. Powell assembled a team of ten men: William Dunn, John Sumner, Walter “Old Shady” Powell, George Bradley, Orwell “OG” Howland, Seneca Howland, Andrew Hall, Williams Hawkins, Frank Goodman, and John Powell himself. A majority of the events that happen within the play are lifted straight from Powell’s journal, such as the pants scene and the depictions of traveling the river. Like with the casting, certain liberties were taken by the playwright in terms of character personality and dialogue. These liberties are based from the descriptions provided by Powell’s journal.

“Men on Boats” is a brilliant and hilarious tale that tackles a complex array of issues. While providing strong themes concerning gender, the script also addresses the glaring issues of Westward Expansion, legacy, and entitlement. The play continues to prove an ambitious champion of the idea that theater is for everyone, by everyone.

## Land Acknowledgement:

Mercer University Theatre would like to take this portion of the program to recognize the Indigenous American lands passed through by the Powell Expedition. The following are the native tribes whose land was passed through, and eventually taken by the United States Government:

Ute  
Havasupai  
Pueblo  
Navajo  
Hualapai  
Southern Paiute  
Hopi

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AND Mercer Players Student group on facebook at:



**The Official Mercer Players Group**



## TATTNALL SQUARE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

The historic church that has stood sentry for more than 100 years at the corner of Macon's College and Oglethorpe Streets, has experienced a renaissance to become Tattnall Square Center for the Arts.

The Center serves as a community theatre and arts venue, as well as home to the University's Theatre Department. Pews, carpet, and remnants of a 1960s remodel have been removed to make way for a new multi-purpose arts space. Sunday School classrooms have been transformed into teaching studios, a scenic shop with a two-story loft, costume shop and storage, and faculty offices. The Center accommodates visual and performing arts, lectures, film screenings, and workshops hosted by community arts organizations.

The Tattnall Square Center is the first effort in our arts-rich community to create a space where performing arts, visual arts, education and film could all be presented in one space.



## UP NEXT AT MERCER UNIVERSITY THEATRE:

