

SUBSCRIPTIONS STILL AVAILABLE FOR OUR 66TH SEASON

This production of *Rocket Man* kicks off our 66th season that includes a mix of music, comedy, and drama in settings ranging from 17th century France to 19th century England to contemporary America. For the first time, tickets to our ever-popular version of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* can be purchased as part of season subscriptions. And even though the season is underway, it is not too late to become a subscriber and get the full benefits of reduced prices and guaranteed seats of your choice. You can choose five, six, or seven-show plans. You can even count *Rocket Man* as one of your shows and get the discounted ticket price for this production.

Colonial Players offers you consistently high-quality theater as attested to by the numerous awards we have won in recent years in competitions for community theaters in the Washington-Baltimore region. Here is a look at the rest of the season we have lined up for your entertainment. Information is available in the lobby. Subscriptions can be purchased by mail, through the box office at 410-268-7373, or online at thecolonialplayers.org.

★ **A FEW GOOD MEN:** The excitement of courtroom drama involving complex characters makes Aaron Sorkin's play a wonderful theater experience. Three officers, defending two marines charged with murder, search for the truth about an exercise in illegal discipline that results in the death of a third marine. This play contains mature themes and language.

★ **A CHRISTMAS CAROL:** Colonial Players' beloved version of Charles Dickens' classic is back, and for the first time, subscribers can purchase tickets as part of their season package. Subscribers also can buy two additional tickets in advance for each subscription. This version of *A Christmas Carol* was written especially for Colonial Players by Richard Wade and Dick Gessner, and is firmly established as a holiday tradition in Annapolis.

★ **THE LIAR:** This sparkling comedy is an adaptation of a play written in 1643 about a man who cannot tell the truth and a servant who cannot tell a lie. As updated in contemporary language by David Ives, it is full of spicy banter and mistaken identities. Audiences will be dazzled as the story races to its hilarious conclusion.

★ **WATCH ON THE RHINE:** Set in America in 1941, this play deals with an American woman whose German husband is working to thwart Hitler's rise to power. Fearing for the safety of their children, they return to her home, where the husband is recognized by a house guest. The violent outcome of that discovery shocks the sheltered American family out of their ignorance about what is going on in Europe.

★ **EARNEST IN LOVE:** This is a musical version of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, a witty and hilarious satire about the courtship of two affluent young women by two self-indulgent young gentlemen. The plans of Jack and Algernon spiral out of control as they woo Gwendolyn and Cecily and seek to overcome opposition from the formidable Lady Bracknell. Of course, all ends happily with not just two weddings, but three.

★ **WHY TORTURE IS WRONG AND THE PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEM:** Christopher Durang, a master of outrageous and often absurdist comedy, tackles disturbing elements of America's homeland insecurity in this tale peopled with unusual characters: a passionate butterfly collector, a woman who married an Irish terrorist while under the influence, and a secret agent who speaks like cartoon characters. This play contains violence as well as mature themes and language.





THE COLONIAL PLAYERS, INC.

108 East Street • Annapolis, MD 21401

Telephone: 410-268-7373

thecolonialplayers.org

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the first production of The Colonial Players' 66th season. We are already running full-tilt toward the organization's officially stated purpose: "... to provide facilities, education, training, and encouragement to all members of the community who are interested in participating in the dramatic arts ..." and to provide a variety of dramatic entertainment.

This season's slate is the epitome of variety. Prepare tonight for an unexplored frontier when we peek in on a family delving deep into ... themselves? their relationships? space? In coming months, you'll experience lovers and liars in 17th century France; a Washington D.C. family shaken by WWII; Oscar Wilde's late 19th Century England (with an optional stopover in Dickens' Christmas-time London); a military courtroom; and a bizarre tale of a family that "can't handle the truth" about our nation's military involvement. As for Colonial's facilities, take a look above you. Our new light grid and lighting instruments are safer, more energy efficient, and can produce lighting effects not previously possible in our distinctive space. And we are proud to spotlight our commitment to education, training, and encouragement: Our first two directors this season are "homegrown." Scott Nichols (*Rocket Man*) and Jeff Sprague (*A Few Good Men*) are familiar to audiences as actors. Two years ago, each directed in our biennial one-act play festival, which provides opportunities for new directors, playwrights, and actors. They now make their debuts as directors of full-length subscription shows. Welcome, guys.

Had it not been for the hard work, commitment, and talent of the many volunteers who gave of their time and talent onstage and behind the scenes, The Colonial Players would not be entering our 66th season. Nor would we still be around without you – our patrons, our audience, our friends – who support CP's purpose through your ticket purchases and the love of theater you share with us. Thanks, welcome, and enjoy the season!

– DARICE CLEWELL

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director.....Scott Nichols
Producer.....Tom Stuckey
Stage Manager.....Herb Elkin
Set and Floor Designer.....Edd Miller
Lead Carpenter.....Ted Yablonski
Carpenters.....Bob Mumper, Jim Robinson, Grant Thorpe
Set and Floor Painting.....Edd Miller, Scott Nichols, Tom Stuckey
Lighting Designer.....Terry Averill
Assistant Lighting Designer.....Krisztina Vanyi
Lighting Assistants.....Eric Lund, Tom Stuckey, Hannah Sturm, Cseni Szabo
Sound Designers.....Kaelynn Miller (Sound Effects), Jim Reiter (Music)
Sound/Lighting Board Operators.....Marguerite Jahns, Cseni Szabo
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Costume Designer.....Hannah Sturm
Special Effects Animation.....Jason Vaughan
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Program Designer.....Harlequin Designs
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dianne Smith
Terry Averill
Ben Carr
Vicki Cone

Michael Robinson
John Robinson
John Wright

Econolite
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Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Laser lighting instruments will be used briefly during this production at the end of Act I and beginning of Act II. While these are very low-intensity lasers, patrons are advised not to look directly at the fixtures mounted in the ceiling. Patrons who are sensitive to motion sickness should be aware that special lighting effects before and after the intermission will involve considerable movement of lights and patterns.

TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS *(continued)*

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Colonial Players gratefully acknowledges the generous bequest from Roland Riley, a longtime patron whose gift helps assure the future economic viability of our theater.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

STEVEN DIETZ would seem to have little in common with Tennessee Williams and Edward Albee except that all three wrote plays. But Dietz, little-known author of *Rocket Man*, shares something else with those giants of the American theater. In 2010, he tied with Albee and Williams for the No. 8 spot on the list of the nation's Top Ten Most Produced Playwrights. Since his first play was produced in 1981, he has written more than 30 plays and has adapted about a dozen plays from other sources. Dietz has never had a work produced on Broadway, but his work is popular with

regional, community, and college theaters around the country. Colonial Players produced his play *Inventing Van Gogh* in February of 2011. Dietz has won numerous awards, including two from the Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays, the Lila Wallace/Readers' Digest Award, and the Edgar Allan Poe Award for Best Mystery. He also is a director and has worked with some of America's leading regional theaters, including Louisville's Humana Festival, the Sundance Institute, and Seattle Repertory Theatre. Dietz teaches playwriting and directing at the University of Texas.

ABOUT OUR NEXT PLAY

October will bring to our stage a compelling courtroom drama about the trial of two Marines for complicity in the death of a fellow Marine at Guantanamo Bay. *A Few Good Men* was written by Aaron Sorkin, best known for *West Wing*, his enormously popular and successful television drama. *A Few Good Men* opened on Broadway in 1989; a movie version three years later starred Tom Cruise and was an Academy Award nominee for best picture and a Golden Globe nominee for best screenplay.

Sorkin got the idea for *A Few Good Men* from his sister Deborah, who helped defend two Marines who almost killed another Marine in a hazing incident ordered by a superior officer at Guantanamo. Sorkin's play focuses on a similar but fictional incident, delving into concepts of duty and honor, and the command structure in the Marine Corps as defense lawyers probe for hidden reasons behind the death. It opens Oct. 17 and runs through Nov. 8.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

What if we were given a second chance to seize all those missed opportunities of our lives? Or, what if a parallel universe existed where our lives turned out quite differently? Recently divorced and in the midst of a mid-life crisis, Donny has put all of his belongings on his front lawn with a sign, "Here's my life. Make an offer." Then, putting his recliner under the skylight in his attic, he stares at the stars and contemplates this universe and his other life. Would everything be perfect in this parallel world, or as Louise believes, would we all make the same mistakes in new and interesting ways? When in the course of our journey we stop and look back at our choices, it is only natural to have regrets. But we cannot let these regrets take over our lives and keep us from realizing the rest of the road still lies ahead. This is a play about the road not taken.

In Donny's other world, we live our lives backward. We start out old and work our way back to childhood, counting down life's milestones in reverse. It is fascinating and challenging to wrap our heads around this alternate reality. Do other timelines exist? If so, do we exist and continue to exist within them? There is much in this play open to interpretation and imagination. Like life, not everything comes neatly packaged with a bow on top. But this is one of the magical things about theatre—when the conversation continues even after the play has ended. So I hope you enjoy the questions and ideas this play raises. And I hope you go have a glass of wine afterwards and continue the discussion.

— **SCOTT NICHOLS**

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



This is the first main stage production **SCOTT NICHOLS** has directed at Colonial Players. This summer, he directed the original one-act play *Queen of the Northern Monkeys* at CP's One-Act Festival. For the 2008 one-acts, he directed *Hamlet, Act VI*, which was performed in the Maryland Community Theatre Festival. Scott performed recently at CP as Sheriff Reynolds in *Bat Boy* and previously as Wigs in *Enter the Guardsman*, Max in *Lend Me a Tenor*, Olf in *Incorruptible*, Birdy in *Terra Nova*,

and various roles in *Under Milkwood*. He also performed in Dignity Players' two-person show, *Stones in His Pockets*, and in *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*. Other favorite roles include Linus in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* and Little Mary Sunshine in *Chicago*, both at Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre; Phillip in *The Lion in Winter*; Don in *Butterflies Are Free*; and various roles in *Jacques Brel*. Scott would especially like to thank Jason for always being there to provide love, patience, and understanding.



A WRINKLE IN TIME

We tend to think of time as constant -- a parade of seconds, minutes, hours, and days marching steadily into an unknown future. Who hasn't wondered what it would be like to go back in time or move forward to see what the future holds? For hundreds of years, time has been a fascinating topic for writers who spin imaginative scenarios about traveling to the past and the future through dreams, magic, and time machines. In *Rocket Man*, Steven Dietz plays with time as have countless other writers, but he does it in an unusual and perhaps unique way. In the second act, he envisions an alternate universe in which people live backward. It is a concept that you may find difficult to wrap your head around. But it will be well worth the effort and a lot of fun to give it a try.



THE CAST



BEN CARR
(Donny)

Ben is excited to be back performing at Colonial Players. Some of his previous roles at CP include Biff Loman in *Death of a Salesman*, Michael Wells in *Two Rooms*, Tom Donahue in *These Shining Lives*, and Hertel Daggett in *Dog Logic*. He has also performed at Standing O Productions in *Retreat From Moscow* and *Tracers* and at Dignity Players in *Stones in His Pocket*. He would like to thank Scott and the rest of the cast for making this such a wonderful experience. "Most importantly, I would like to tell my wife, Cassie, that I love you and I promise this will be the last one....for a while."



LAURA E. GAYVERT
(Rita)

Laura is thrilled to be back at Colonial Players with such an incredible cast. She was last seen in *Crimes of the Heart* and *Sordid Lives* at Dignity Players. Prior to that, she appeared at BCT in *The Seven Year Itch* and in several productions at Colonial Players, including *Trip to Bountiful*, *Moon Over Buffalo*, *Wonder of the World*, and *Frozen* (NOT to be confused with the new Disney film... obviously) for which she was nominated for the Washington Area Theatre Community Honors Outstanding Featured Actress in a Play for her portrayal of Agnetha. "Thanks to Director Scott Nichols for giving me this great opportunity and, of course, most especially to my husband, my tether, for his love and support."



PAIGE MILLER
(Trisha)

Paige is excited to be back at Colonial Players for this production of *Rocket Man*. Her most recent roles include Shelley in *Bat Boy* at Colonial Players and Marcy in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at James Madison University. Paige would like to thank her friends and family for being so supportive of her decision to pursue her love of

performing. Lastly, she would like to thank Scott for this amazing opportunity!



SHIRLEY PANEK
(Louise)

Shirley is excited to be a part of this wonderful show and amazingly talented cast. Last seen in Colonial Players' *Superior Donuts* (Ofc. Randy Osteen), Shirley has spent more time backstage than onstage recently: lighting designer for *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, *Communicating Doors*, *Trying*, *Moonlight and Magnolias*, and *Chapter Two* (2012 Washington Area Theatre Community Honors nominee); and stage manager for both *Bat Boy* and *1776*. But performing is still her favorite, and this show is no exception. Two favorite roles include Laura Warwick in *The Unexpected Guest* and Kaye in *Dog Logic* at Colonial Players. Other favorites include Grete in *Sight Unseen* (Dignity Players) and Monica Welles in *Rehearsal for Murder* and Lucia Armory in *Black Coffee* (Bowie Community Theatre). "Thank you, Scott, for your vision and patience, the cast for all the fun and laughter through rehearsals, and Herb and crew for all your hard work. Love to Drew, Emma, and Jeff. Thanks for all your love and support."



TIMOTHY SAYLES
(Buck)

Tim is very happy to be back on the Colonial Players stage, where he recently played the roles of Luther Flynn in *Superior Donuts*, Daddy Warbucks in *Annie*, and John Dickinson in *1776*. His most recent role, at Bowie Playhouse, was that of headwaiter Rudolph in the 2nd Star production of *Hello, Dolly!*, winner of this year's top prize (best overall production) in the Ruby Griffith Awards. Tim thanks Scott for the opportunity to be in such a wonderfully strange and thought-provoking play, and he can scarcely believe his good fortune in sharing the stage with such marvelous friends and gifted actors as Ben, Laura, Paige, and Shirley. Tim lives in Annapolis, where he has been editor in chief of Chesapeake Bay Magazine since 1996.

TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Thank you for your support. Your generous gifts help us to continue to provide educational and training programs, encouragement and entertainment to all who are interested in dramatic arts.

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John & Karen Wright



THE STAFF (continued)

39 Steps. He has also appeared with the Annapolis Chorale, Annapolis Shakespeare Company, and Bay Theatre. At 2nd Star Productions, Jim directed *1776*, *The Music Man*, *Once upon a Mattress*, and *How to Succeed in Business*.



CONSTANCE ROBINSON (Properties Designer)

In past years, Connie volunteered as marketing assistant and graphic designer for Colonial Players in addition to working in the box office. In 2013, she was properties designer for *Collected Stories* with Dignity Players. At Colonial Players, Connie earned a Washington Area Theatre Community Honors nomination for best props for the 2013 production of *In The Next Room, or The Vibrator Play*. She also collected props last season for *Annie* and designed props and helped decorate the set for *Dead Man's Cell Phone*. "It has been a pleasure gathering props with the enthusiastic duo of Director Scott Nichols and Set Designer Edd Miller for *Rocket Man*, one of many plays written by the talented Steven Dietz." Connie will be the properties designer for CP's traditional holiday musical, *A Christmas Carol*, to be directed by Carol Youmans. Connie thanks her husband, John, for his continued support, creative prop assistance, and for loaning the theater his books, tools, and other essentials.



TOM STUCKEY (Producer)

Tom is a longtime member of Colonial Players who is willing to tackle all sorts of duties as long as they don't involve acting. He produced *Annie* and *Coyote on a Fence* during the 2013-14 season. He also produced *Going to St. Ives* (2012) and *Hauptmann* (2008) for CP, both of which won the Washington Area Theatre Community Honors award for best play. Tom handles newspaper publicity and edits show programs. He also does set painting, helps with lighting, ushers, and has held four positions on the CP Board of Directors. He has been involved with Colonial Players for more than 45 years.



HANNAH STURM (Costume Designer)

After several years of bouncing through different roles at Colonial Players, Hannah is thrilled to design costumes for *Rocket Man*. She is a recent graduate of St. Mary's College of Maryland with a BA in Theater, Film, and Media Studies. Currently completing an internship with the Maryland State Archives, Hannah is doing soul searching and job searching for a career in the arts. "Thanks to Mom, Dad, Dingo, and A for being the lights in my sky."

As you entered the theater for this performance, you may have noticed the bright new lighting that makes it easier and safer for you to find your seats and read this program. During the last six weeks, more than 15 volunteers spent hundreds of hours hanging 31 new LED lighting fixtures above the seating areas, inspecting and repairing more than 100 lighting fixtures and dozens of connecting cable and installing six new LED strip lights around the stage to replace the old incandescent fixtures.

Our Board of Directors contracted with Parlights Inc. to remove the old haphazardly installed lighting grid in the ceiling and replace it with a new geometrical grid over the entire theater that provides more flexibility for our lighting designers. We hope that completion of this project along with our four new moveable LED fixtures and three stationary LED fixtures will allow us to provide a better, more enjoyable theatrical experience for our audiences.



THE STAFF



TERRY AVERILL (Lighting Designer)

Terry returns as lighting designer for *Rocket Man* after lighting the streets of New York for last season's production of *Annie*. He won the Washington Area Theatre Community Honors award for best lighting design for *Earth and Sky* in 2010. Terry has directed and acted in several Colonial Players productions, most recently appearing onstage as Arthur Przybyszewski in the 2014 production of *Superior Donuts*. He is currently in his fourth summer portraying abolitionist John Brown at the Smithsonian's National American History Museum. Terry designed the set for *Bat Boy* last season as well as for *Kindertransport*, one of the shows he directed at CP. Other directorial assignments include *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* and *Sunlight*. Terry is an architect and just completed four years as president of Colonial Players.



HERB ELKIN (Stage Manager)

Herb's most recent CP stage managing credits include *Coyote on a Fence* (2014), *Trying* (2013), *Going to St. Ives* (2012), *The Diviners* (2011), *Dog Logic* (2010), *The Lion in Winter* (2010), *Over My Dead Body* (2009), *Two Rooms* (2009), and *Enchanted April* (2008). Prior to becoming active behind the scenes, he appeared onstage in several CP and other area productions. Herb serves as CP's Vice President and works at the U.S. Naval Academy.



EDD MILLER (Set and Floor Designer)

Edd has a long history with Colonial Players as a director, actor, set designer, and volunteer in other areas. His most recent set design was for *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, the final show of the 2013-14 season. He designed sets last season for *Annie* and *Coyote on a Fence*, which he also directed. Edd was nominated for a Washington Area Theatre Community Honors

set design award for *Chapter Two* and won a 2012 WATCH award for best direction for *Going to St. Ives*, which also won awards for best play (out of 83 plays judged) and for best lead actress. Other set designs for CP include productions of *Sunlight*, *In the Next Room, or The Vibrator Play*, and *Taking Steps* during the 2012-13 season. Edd also has acted in and directed many shows since joining CP in 1964.



KAELYNN MILLER (Sound Designer)

Kaelynn is trying out the new-to-her role of sound designer since Scott asked her ever so nicely. She has been involved in many productions over the last five years, both onstage and off, in a variety of roles from actress to child wrangler to set painter to last-minute button sewer to warm-up leader to costume designer. Kaelynn serves as Treasurer on CP's Board of Directors. By day she works in the music industry as a customer service representative for an orchestral instrument accessory distributor, where some days she actually gets to use her bachelor's degree in music. Kaelynn would like to let everyone know that she completely blames Wes for giving her yet ANOTHER job that people will now ask her to do at the theater, but she loves him anyway.



JIM REITER (Music Designer)

Jim says *Rocket Man* is, like good music, lyrical, quirky, and profound, so selecting and matching the right song to the right moment was a delight. He played Gordon in *Dead Man's Cell Phone* in June at Colonial Players, where he also appeared in *Moonlight and Magnolias*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Dog Logic*, *She Loves Me!*, *Proof*, and *Driving Miss Daisy*. Jim received the 2008 Outstanding Featured Actor Award from the Washington Area Theatre Community Honors for his multiple-character performance in Colonial's *Hauptmann*. Other music design credits include *Art* and *Collected Stories* at Dignity Players, where he directed *The*

THE COLONIAL PLAYERS, INC.
presents



Written by
STEVEN DIETZ

Directed by
SCOTT NICHOLS

THE CAST

(in order of appearance)

Donny.....Ben Carr
Buck.....Timothy Sayles
Trisha.....Paige Miller
Rita.....Laura Gayvert
Louise.....Shirley Panek

TIME

This present. And another one.

PLACE

The attic of an American home.

There will be one intermission between Act I and Act II.

Produced by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service.

Taking photographs and using any recording devices are strictly prohibited. Smoking is prohibited throughout the building.