

LIFE OF A STEWARDESS IN THE 1950S: Girdles, glamour, and not much money

"A high school graduate, single (widows and divorcees with no children considered), 20 years of age (girls 19 1/2 may apply for future consideration). 5'2" but no more than 5'9", weight 105 to 135 in proportion to height and have at least 20/40 vision without glasses."

- New York Times classified ad in 1968 seeking applicants for airline stewardesses

The three stewardesses (yes, that's what they were called then) in *Boeing Boeing* epitomize the stereotype of the young women who flew around the country and around the world in the 1940s, '50s, and '60s: young, beautiful, a little exotic, slipping into hotel beds with pilots and wealthy businessmen while putting up with unwelcome touches from passengers. As with most stereotypes, there was an element of truth, although the willingness of stewardesses to engage in one-night stands was most likely exaggerated.

In a 2002 *Vanity Fair* article, Laurie Power, a flight attendant with TWA in the 1960s and '70s, put it this way: "These women almost to a person were kind of the black sheep of their families... They left (home) because they couldn't stand the drudgery of everyday life, which was marriage or teaching, and washing on Monday and ironing on Tuesday." For Power, being a stewardess meant invitations to parties thrown by big-shot Hollywood producers, to countless hotel and restaurant openings, and, one time, to a cruise on a yacht owned by one of the richest men in Greece. "A bunch of pretty girls sitting around a pool—people were always inviting us here and there and everywhere, because we were sort of like icing, I suppose," she said.

The airlines and the media fed into the stereotype. *Coffee, Tea or Me?*, a book about the alleged misadventures of stewardesses, became a best seller in 1967. National Airlines once had an advertising campaign featuring sexy young models proclaiming: "Fly Me." At the same time, airlines took steps to protect their stewardesses-in-training from romantic suitors. Braniff's International Hostess Training College in Dallas installed cage-like bars around dorm-room balconies to keep out amorous young men. American's nearby Stewardess College was surrounded by an eight-foot-high electrical fence.

The glamour of the job came at a price. Pay was so low that stewardesses routinely lived four to five in apartments to save on rent. Airlines imposed strict guidelines in hiring and employment practices. Only women who were unmarried and between the ages of 20 and 27 could be hired, and termination was almost automatic at age 32. Betty C. McCann, writing in 2011 about her experiences as a stewardess for Delta in the 1950s, said the rules were quite strict. Every young woman had to wear a girdle. Flights were monitored by a chief stewardess who checked dress and work habits. Hats had to be worn at all times. "And woe to the girl whose weight exceeded 132 pounds," Ms. McCann wrote.

Still, despite the low pay and long working hours, there were 100 applicants for every three or four jobs. The allure of a chance to travel, meet famous people, and occasionally snag a wealthy husband overcame the drawbacks. Ms. McCann had no regrets about her choice of vocation. "Unlike today, flying back in the fifties was a glamorous and an exciting job. It gave me the opportunity to travel and meet people. Most of all it was fun. I wouldn't have missed it for the world," she wrote.

Sources: masslive.com; *Vanity Fair*; *Femininity in Flight* web site; *Wikipedia*.





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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 1960s, when jetsetters hopped the globe, the British Invasion rocked music, shag carpets adorned floors, the Cold War and hot pants hit the headlines, the summer of love changed boundaries, and we put a man on the moon. Since it takes place in the '60s, *Boeing Boeing* is a chauvinistic romantic farce; an outright comedy for the winter doldrums.

This is an intentional contrast to our most recent show, *Venus in Fur*. We have received emails, letters, and calls that judged *Venus* "the best production I have seen in years," "well acted, but the worst play we have ever seen here," and "a long time coming, but worth the wait!" Our audiences aren't schizophrenic; I think these diverse opinions mean we are doing exactly the job our founders set for us 67 years ago: help the community appreciate the arts by providing a variety of dramatic entertainment.

Each year, the volunteers of Colonial Players give careful thought to selecting a season of plays to satisfy loyal subscribers, entice new audiences, and stretch our artistic boundaries. Unlike community and professional theaters that have one or two people making decisions, we entrust a full committee of Players to sort through scores of scripts – reading, assessing, and debating their way to a cohesive curriculum for the next theatrical season. We can't be everything to everybody, but we do strive to offer something for everyone. And we listen to you.

So let us know how you like the shows you see with us, including tonight's. Perhaps you'll love its laughs ... hate its sexism ... or just take it for what it is: a delightful '60s farce like so many that emerged from that period intact because they are well written and entertaining. And no matter how diverse the plays we choose for a season, you can count on each and every one having both those qualities.

In April in this space, Artistic Director Mickey Lund will preview our variety pack of plays for next year.

– DARICE CLEWELL

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Producers.....Tim Brown, Joan Townshend
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for vintage canister vacuum
Matthew Nichols
for portrait design of air hostesses
Sharon Cimaglia and Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre
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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.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

What a joy to get the chance to work on this funny and fun show! Like many, I often go to the theater to see a poignant or profound drama filled with introspective characters and social commentary. And then there are plays like this! This is a high-energy, mistaken identity, doors-slamming, girl-kissing romp of classic French farce. I was fortunate that, many years ago, one of the first shows I did at Colonial Players was Ken Ludwig's wonderful *Lend Me a Tenor*, and from then and there I was hooked on farce!

I'm so glad this play, written by French playwright Marc Camoletti and first performed in 1962, was dusted off and rebooted in 2007. Still set in the stylish and swinging early sixties, the revived script wisely kept the sexy and turned the sexist

premise on its ear. The three "air hostesses," who live by the adage "Vive la difference!," understand the gender games of their time and deftly play them to their advantage. They work in the cabin, but they certainly show no fear in taking the controls when needed. Add into the mix two young schemers who inevitably lose control of the situation plus a sarcastic French maid who is just as quick in doling out philosophy as she is with a snarky quip, and you've got the fluffiest of soufflés possible. So please sit back, make sure your tray table is in the locked position, buckle up, and enjoy your flight!

— SCOTT NICHOLS

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



SCOTT NICHOLS is back in the director's chair at Colonial Players after having directed *Rocket Man* last season. Previously, during CP's one-act festivals, he directed *Queen of the Northern Monkeys* and *Hamlet, Act VI*, which went on to be performed at the Maryland Community Theatre Festival. Scott has also been seen onstage at Colonial Players performing as Sheriff Reynolds in *Bat Boy*, 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 was also in Dignity Players' productions of *Gross Indecency: the Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* and the two-person *Stones in His Pockets*. 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 providing love, patience, and understanding.

ABOUT OUR NEXT PLAY

The Colonial Players will usher in the spring with a musical version of *The Secret Garden*, the beloved 1911 novel of the same name written by Frances Hodgson Burnett. This story of a young girl sent to live with an uncle after the death of her parents is filled with lush, soaring melodies by Lucy Simon and haunting book and lyrics by Marsha Norman. The story is set in the early years of the 20th century. Ten-year-old Mary Lennox, whose parents have died in India, comes to England to live in the unhappy household of her uncle, who is grieving the loss of his wife. With the help from spirit guides

and the friendship offered by a young gardener, Mary blossoms as she brings new life to the neglected garden and to her uncle and sickly cousin. *The Secret Garden* won Tony Awards for best book of a musical, best featured actress in a musical, and best scenic design of a musical and was nominated for four other awards. It also received numerous other honors, including 14 Drama Desk nominations. *The Secret Garden* opens April 8 and closes May 8. Tickets are available by calling 410-268-7373 or online at thecolonialplayers.org.



THE CAST



BRANDON BENTLEY
(Bernard)

Brandon is very excited to have his biggest role yet as Bernard in *Boeing Boeing!* He made both his Colonial Players and general stage acting debut in 2014 with *This or That*, a festival of short plays, starring in both *Sure Thing* and *Tough Cookies*. The latter participated in state and regional one-act play contests. Last season he portrayed Sam Weinberg in Colonial Players' production of *A Few Good Men*, a WATCH award nominee for best play. Aside from acting onstage, Brandon also wrote/directed/co-starred in the 2012 short horror film *The Crossing* (also featuring Boeing Boeing's own costume designer, Christina McAlpine, in a primary role), and hosted the YouTube movie review series *Someone Has To Review It!* Brandon gives a big round of thanks to his parents, who have supported his love for the arts since he was little, as well as the Colonial Players family who have made him feel at home from the beginning.



REBECCA GIFT
(Gretchen)

Rebecca is thrilled to be performing in her first show with Colonial Players. Graduating from Frostburg State University last May, she has performed in a number of theaters in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Most recently, she was seen in *Catch Me if You Can* with ASGT in Annapolis and is a part of the team at Everyman Theater in Baltimore. She would like to thank all of those involved with this production for being so lovely to work with.



COLIN HOOD
(Robert)

Colin is excited about his first appearance at Colonial Players, but you may have seen him at one of Annapolis Summer Garden Theater's productions over the years (*Spamalot*, *Catch Me if You Can*, *Avenue Q*). Colin would like to thank his friends and family for supporting his passions and for always having his back. "Sit back and enjoy the flight!"



DEBRA KIDWELL
(Gloria)

Debra is happy to make her debut appearance at Colonial Players in this fun and kooky show! Debra loves all things song-and-dance and most recently appeared in the musical *Catch Me If You Can* with Annapolis Summer Garden Theater (2015). Debra thanks her family for their love, and her friends for their support and inspiration. Enjoy the show!



CECE MCGEE-NEWBROUGH
(Berthe)

CeCe is very excited to be doing another show at Colonial Players. She was last seen as Fanny in *Watch on the Rhine*. Some of her favorites include *Annie* with Summer Garden Theatre, *Death and the Maiden* with Dignity Players, and *Silvia, Born Yesterday*, *House of Blue Leaves*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, and *The Clearing* at Colonial Players. In addition to raising her beautiful daughter, Ellie, CeCe works part-time for Hugh Blocker, CPA. She would like to extend her love and thanks to her fellow cast members, her family, and her cats....Tater, Tots, and Tangles!!



SARAH WADE
(Gabriella)

Sarah is very pleased to be part of the cast of *Boeing Boeing*, having most recently been seen onstage as Cecily Cardew in *Ernest in Love*. Other roles at Colonial Players include twins Isabelle and Sabine in the Ruby Griffith Award-winning production of *The Liar*, Catherine in *These Shining Lives*, Star-to-Be in *Annie*, Jessica in *Communicating Doors*, and Kitty in *Taking Steps*, as well as many years of *A Christmas Carol*, most recently as the Charwoman. She also appeared in Dignity Players' production of *Collected Stories* as Lisa Morrison. "Thank you to Eric for letting me indulge in *one more* show before the wedding, to Lois and Carol and they know why, and, of course, to family and friends for understanding that as usual: 'I can't, I have rehearsal.'"



Colonial Players received 26 nominations for awards in the 2015 Washington Area Theatre Community Honors competition. Adjudicators reviewed 38 musicals and 72 plays produced by 30 community theater companies in the Washington region. Winners will be announced March 6. We are pleased that CP received more nominations than any other theater group; thanks to our nominees for all their hard work.

MUSICALS CATEGORY

Ernest in Love

Featured Actor, Duncan Hood; Featured Actress, Barbara Bartos and Sarah Wade; Costumes, Carol Youmans; Lights, Frank Florentine.

PLAYS CATEGORY

The Liar

Lead Actor, Fred Fletcher-Jackson; Featured Actor, Jeff Sprague; Featured Actress, Sarah Wade.

Sherlock's Last Case

Costumes, Carrie Brady; Properties, Constance Robinson; Set Decoration, Constance Robinson, Beth Terranova; Special Effects, Wes Bedsworth, Eric Hufford, Bernhard Mueller-Anderson and Beth Terranova.

Side Man

Outstanding Play, produced by Wes Bedsworth and stage managed by Herb Elkin; Director, Jim Reiter; Lead Actor, Jason Vellon; Lighting, Eric Lund; Sound, Sarah Wade and Jim Reiter.

Morning's at Seven

Outstanding Play, produced by Tom Stuckey and stage managed by Andy McLendon; Lead Actress, Lois Evans; Featured Actors, Michael N. Dunlop, Duncan Hood, and Paul Valteau; Featured Actress, Carol Cohen; Costumes, Dianne Andrew Smith; Lights, Frank Florentine; Hair Design, The Cast.



ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

MARC CAMOLETTI was born a French citizen in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1923, but lived most of his life in Paris. His grandfather was a famous architect in Geneva, designing the city's concert hall and a museum of art and history. Camoletti was trained as an artist and didn't write his first play, *La Bonne Anna*, until he was 35. It was a huge hit in Paris, running for 1,300 performances. He wrote more than 400 plays, *Boeing Boeing* being his signature hit. The English adaptation by Beverly Cross (later revised by Francis Evans) ran for more than 2,000 performances in London. A Broadway version did not catch on with New York audiences and closed after a short run in 1965. *Boeing Boeing* achieved greater success the second time around on Broadway in 2008 when it had a successful run and won the Tony Award for best revival of a play. Most of Carmoletti's plays were comedies dealing with themes of sex, relationships, and secrets. His work is often characterized as "boulevard theatre," a genre characterized by middlebrow sex comedies and named for Paris' *Boulevard du Temple*, location of many theaters.



THE STAFF (continued)

costumes for almost nine years. During the day, she enjoys working with animals in Catonsville, and at night designing and managing her Etsy shop (PrettyBluEyesVintage). "Special thanks to my patient and supportive significant other, Yanick, my friends and family, and especially my mom, who's always encouraged and supported my artistic endeavors."



CONSTANCE ROBINSON
(Properties Designer)

In the past, Connie has volunteered as marketing assistant, graphic designer, and box office assistant for The Colonial Players and is on the current Marketing Committee. Connie was properties designer for *Collected Stories* at Dignity Players. For CP, she collected props for: *In The Next Room, Or The Vibrator Play* (for which she received a WATCH nomination); *Annie*; *Dead Man's Cell Phone*; *Rocket Man*; *A Christmas Carol*; *Watch on the Rhine*; and *Sherlock's Last Case*. She has also assisted with set decoration. Connie thanks her husband, John, for his help by picking up or modifying props. She also thanks her family and friends for loaning some of their belongings as set pieces or props.



JOAN TOWNSHEND
(Co-Producer)

Joan has been active in regional theaters since moving to Maryland. In addition to acting (her favorite roles are Ethel P. Savage in *The Curious Savage* and Lady Thiang in *The King and I*), she has directed, stage managed, run lights, and designed sound. Her other theatrical adventures included hosting *Capital City Profiles*, a television interview show on public service access. She is an organization consultant to local governments, churches, and not-for-profit organizations. "Thanks to Rolph for his great support of my hobby!"



ALAN ZEMLA
(Set Designer)

As the resident set designer and scenic artist for The Audrey Herman Spotlighters Theatre in Baltimore, Alan has designed, built, and painted sets for more than two dozen shows in-the-round since 2012. His favorite designs include *Hello, Dolly!*; *Bus Stop*; *Fiddler on the Roof*; *Into the Woods*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; *God of Carnage*; *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*; and the U.S. premiere of *A Sensation Novel*. He is particularly excited to be working in a new space with new people and new challenges (six doors!). His goal is to someday actually design a set that is not in-the-round and has a proscenium. When not painting faux mahogany or marble, Alan spends his days working as a mechanical engineer for TA Engineering in Catonsville, MD. Thanks to Scott Nichols for inviting me to work in this awesome space.



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THE STAFF



TIM BROWN
(Co-Producer,
Assistant Stage Manager)

As a long-time subscriber, Tim has always wanted to become more involved backstage with his favorite theater. His recent retirement has given him the time to do just that. Starting his volunteer activities last year as an usher, he helped hang lights and operate the tech booth for *Morning's at Seven*. Now he is delighted to be learning the role of Producer under Joan. Tim says he is honored to be working with so many talented people who are involved just for the love of theater and who are just fun to be around.



DAVE CARTER
(Assistant Director,
Stage Manager)

Dave is excited to be involved in his third season with Colonial Players after directing a play in the 2014 July One-Act Festival. He appeared in *Communicating Doors* and *These Shining Lives*. He was most recently seen as Commander Walter Stone in *A Few Good Men* as well as understudy for *Watch on the Rhine*. Dave feels quite honored to have been asked to be assistant director on such a wonderful show as *Boeing Boeing*. He jumps at the chance to be a part of farce theater, his favorite genre, especially when he can work with such a great set of actors as well as crew. Dave especially wants to thank his family and friends for all their support and understanding as he has come back to his passion and is often having to say over the past couple of years.... Sorry, I can't, I have rehearsal.



BEN CORNWELL
(Sound Designer)

Ben returns as sound designer after performing the same role in our previous show, *Venus in Fur*. He is happy to be working on his 15th season at Colonial Players. His first show was *Of Mice and Men* in the 2000-01 season as a sound tech, and he has done a

multitude of shows since. He was nominated for a Washington Area Theatre Community Honors award for his sound design in 2010's *Frozen* and 2014's *Superior Donuts*, both with Colonial Players. He is excited to be working with such a brilliant director, cast, and crew.



ERIC LUND
(Lighting Designer)

Boeing Boeing is Eric's third show as a lighting designer this season. He is a nominee for a WATCH Award for best lighting for his work on *Side Man* in October and teamed up with Alex Brady on the design for *Venus in Fur*. Eric has worked extensively at Colonial Players and other theaters in the Annapolis area, including Dignity Players, where he appeared in several productions and also served as lighting designer. He appeared on the CP stage in productions of *Rebecca*, *The Clearing*, and various years of *A Christmas Carol*. He played Andrew at Bowie Playhouse in *Someone to Watch Over Me*, winner of the Ruby Griffith award, and Eugene in *Broadway Bound* for Vagabond Players. Production credits at CP include directing *Voice of the Prairie* and the 1993 and 2000 productions of *A Christmas Carol*; lighting design for *Frozen*, *Kid Purple*, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* (also set design), *Cabaret*, *Jacques Brel*, and *Angel Street*; and set design for CP's *The Lion in Winter*. He thanks his husband, Mickey, for ... well ... basically everything.



CHRISTINA MCALPINE
(Costume Designer)

Christina is glad to be back in the saddle designing costumes for Colonial Players! She has volunteered here and there with CP after moving to Maryland in 2008. She most recently helped lend a sewing hand on *A Few Good Men*. Past costume design credits at CP include: *Dead Man's Cell Phone* and *The Curious Savage*. She appeared on the CP stage in *Wrong Package* in the 2010 short play festival. Christina holds a BFA in Theatre from the University of West Florida and has been designing and sewing

THE COLONIAL PLAYERS, INC.
presents



Written by
MARC CAMOLETTI

Translated by
BEVERLY CROSS
and **FRANCIS EVANS**

Directed by
SCOTT NICHOLS

THE CAST
(in order of appearance)

Gloria.....Debra Kidwell
Bernard.....Brandon Bentley
Berthe.....Cece McGee-Newbrough
Robert.....Colin Hood
Gabriella.....Sarah Wade
Gretchen.....Rebecca Gift

TIME
1963

PLACE
Paris, Bernard's flat near Orly Airport

ACT I
Scene 1: Morning
Scene 2: Afternoon

ACT II
Evening

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

Produced by Special Arrangement with Samuel French.

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