

ABOUT OUR 65th SEASON

Tickets will go on sale soon for our 65th season, and we invite you to join us for a slate of seven plays and musicals that run the gamut from the always-popular musical *Annie* to paranormal comedy to heartwarming and heartrending dramas. We will celebrate our 65th year of bringing award-winning theater to Annapolis with some of the best plays of current American theater.

- ★ The season opens in September with *Communicating Doors*, a mystery/time travel/farce by England's master of comedy, Alan Ayckbourn. A young woman from the future stumbles upon a hotel door that can take her back in time to 1978 and 1998. With help from two women from the past, she moves back and forth in time trying to save their lives. This play will keep you laughing even as you are mystified by the plot twists so expertly woven into the play.
- ★ America's favorite orphan and her loveable dog take the stage for five weeks in November and December. *Annie* has a timeless ability to entertain and uplift audiences of all ages and is our gift to you for the holiday season. It is packed full of comedy with sparkling songs by Charles Strouse and Martin Charnin such as "Tomorrow," "Easy Street," and "N.Y.C." Thomas Meehan wrote the book of this enduring musical masterpiece with its message of hope that resonates in our troubled times.
- ★ *Coyote on a Fence*, which runs for three weeks in January, is a searing drama about two men on death row. Bruce Graham's play does not ask audiences to judge the two men or the judicial system or capital punishment. It is just a powerful drama about the relationship between the two men, a prison guard and a newspaper reporter.
- ★ *Superior Donuts* is the name of a Chicago donut shop and also the title of the play by Pulitzer and Tony award winner Tracy Letts that will be presented in February and March. *Superior Donuts* is a comedy-drama centered on the warm relationship that develops between the elderly owner of a rundown donut shop and a young African-American employee who is full of ideas about how to turn the shop into a thriving, modern business.
- ★ The idea for our second musical came from a supermarket tabloid story about a half boy/half bat creature found in a cave. Laurence O'Keefe, Keythe Farley, and Brian Flemming took that idea and turned it into *Bat Boy: The Musical*, a high-energy and quirky show about an outsider seeking acceptance from residents of a small West Virginia town. There is a wide variety of exceptional music in this show -- gospel, a touch of rock, love songs, novelty numbers, dances; in short, something for everyone.
- ★ *These Shining Lives*, which runs in May, is the story of women who were hired in the 1920s to paint numerals on faces of watches and clocks. They were assured that the radium powder used for the glow-in-the-dark numerals was harmless. In Melanie Marnich's drama, four women refuse to allow the company that stole their health to also kill their spirits -- or endanger the lives of those who come after them.
- ★ The season ends in June with *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, Sarah Ruhl's wildly imaginative comedy/mystery about a woman in a restaurant who takes the cell phone of a dead man at the next table. Thus begins her quirky odyssey into the lives of other people who knew the deceased. The play was a Pulitzer Prize finalist and a Tony Award nominee.



May 3 - May 18, 2013



THE COLONIAL PLAYERS, INC.

108 East Street • Annapolis, MD 21401

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The nineteenth century was a time of miraculous scientific advancement with tens of thousands of inventions meant to make life more pleasurable or to relieve suffering. The electric light bulb and the vibrator were two of these, both meant to make life a bit easier. Oh but if only life and human nature were that simple. It is Dr. Givings who expresses it most succinctly: "What men do not observe because their intellect prevents them from seeing would fill many books."

In the Next Room offers a glimpse of this paradox. Intellectually, scientific discovery can solve many puzzles, but in doing so it may obscure the very thing being examined so intently. Electric light may illuminate the surface of our world so that we may observe more clearly, but it may blind us to the flickering, fleeting, and chimerical nature of our lives and of love.

It is art rather than science that reveals more about the nature of humanity, maybe because the artist must be immersed in the aura of the other, in the soul being observed that hovers just in front of the body itself. The artist does not merely observe, does not stand aloof, but must become part of the other in order to reveal truth, a dangerous proposition. For by investing our souls in another, might we not lose ourselves?

I am a romantic and believe that only in giving do we receive. Only by risking the loss of some part of ourselves can we ever really know and love anyone else. Lose yourself today in laughter and in tears as we paint a picture of human understanding and love.

- TERRY AVERILL



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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Sarah Ruhl wrote her first play in 1995 while a student at Brown University and is one of the most respected playwrights in contemporary American theater. She was a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 2005 for *The Clean House* and again for her 2009 play -- *In the Next Room, or The Vibrator Play* -- which also was a Tony Award nominee for best new play. Among Ms. Ruhl's prestigious honors are the Helen Hayes Award,

the Helen Merrill Emerging Playwrights Award, and a MacArthur Fellowship. Her plays have been produced at six theaters in New York City along with major regional theaters across the country and have been translated into seven languages and performed in five countries. Colonial Players will present another play by Ms. Ruhl, *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, as the final production of our 2013-2014 season.

ABOUT OUR NEXT PLAY

Colonial Players will get you in the proper mood for a summer of fun with a rollicking comedy by Alan Ayckbourn, a master of English comedy writing. *Taking Steps* runs from June 7 through June 29 and brings to an end our 64th season. Mr. Ayckbourn wrote *Taking Steps* specifically for theater in the round, which seems a bit counterintuitive since it takes place on three floors of a Victorian mansion. In the true tradition of farce, the play features mistaken identities, confused motives, and lots of shouting and running in and out of rooms

and up and down imaginary staircases. *Taking Steps* was Mr. Ayckbourn's 24th play, and critics loved it, with various reviews describing it as "excruciatingly, achingly funny"; "frantic, frothy farce"; and "beautifully, slickly, done ... with collapsing beds, collapsed bed-mates, and misinterpreted suicide notes." Mr. Ayckbourn has written 76 full-length plays, and *Taking Steps* is one of his favorites. Colonial Players will open next season in September with *Communicating Doors*, another of his comedies.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

What in the world is going on here?! A little bit of history, a little bit of fun, Sarah Ruhl's heartfelt play is about men and women typical of their day in Victorian America whose understanding of sex, and particularly of female sexuality, was so benighted that doctors did not believe there was a female sexual response! Most proper men and women felt that sex was an embarrassing physical duty. It was a bit messy and unpleasant but, like birth, necessary for the creation of children and continuation of the species. 1885 was long before the Kinsey Reports, the Hite Report in the '50's and '60's, and the feminist-allied sexual revolution of the '60's and '70's taught Americans about female sexual response and the potential for intimacy and love physically expressed in the joy of sex.

So in 1885, when electricity was revolutionizing American culture, doctors developed electro-massage therapy to improve what had been manual therapies up to that time (actually since Hypocrates' time!). Massage, usually by nurses and midwives, was prescribed to treat hysteria,

depression, nervousness, and other feminine maladies. Doctors attributed these conditions to a congestion of fluids and pressures in the womb which, when released, would restore balance and better mental health. Doctors didn't connect the therapies or their happy results to normal female sexual response at all. They didn't know it existed or what was really happening when patients had the relieving paroxysms. This set of facts is the foundation of Sarah Ruhl's love story about the good doctor and his passionate young wife, who finds in the overheard therapies a key that she instinctively recognizes could unlock the intimacy she longs for with her prim, restrained husband. As he learns to love her in the way her body and heart demand, Dr. Givings' story, albeit a little shocking as we watch, becomes a joyful affirmation of the beauty of physical love between loving partners. So, please, loosen your corset strings a little and enjoy *The Vibrator Play*!

— CAROL YOUMANS

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



CAROL YOUMANS has been a devoted participant in community theater for over 30 years, learning most of what she knows about theater from workshops and experience gained by working on every aspect of theater here at Colonial Players. She has designed sets, lights, costumes and sound; crewed; and served on many boards, most recently as Artistic Director, but formerly as President, Director of Marketing and Community Outreach, Vice President, House Director and others. She has

served the past five seasons as a WATCH judge for Colonial Players and works on the Marketing and Box Office teams. She loves directing best. Among her favorites are *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Jim Gallagher at ASGT and *Dog Logic*, *Fences*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Working*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *As Bees In Honey Drown*, *Macbeth*, and *The Busie Body* here at CP. Thanks to this lovely, bold cast and the techies who have made my dream of *In the Next Room* come true: Edd, Dick, Julie, Jen, Andy, Connie, and Angie.



THE CAST



MARK T. ALLEN
(Mr. Daldry)

Mark is delighted to be back on stage with The Colonial Players. His previous acting stint here was as Inspector Thomas in *The Unexpected Guest*. He has worked onstage and behind the scenes at other groups, including Columbia Community Players, Laurel Mill Playhouse, Rockville Little Theatre, and Howard County Summer Theater. Other favorite roles include Tony Scudamore in *The Brides of March*, Mr. Potter in *It's a Wonderful Life* and Curtis Appleby in *Night Watch*. Many thanks to Megan, Ben, the Sprout and the Tuggers for all their support.

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BEN CARR
(Dr. Givings)

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*, Mike Conner in *The Philadelphia Story*, Michael Wells in *Two Rooms*, C.C. Showers in *The Diviners*, and Hertel Daggett in *Dog Logic*. He has also performed at Standing O Productions in *The Retreat from Moscow* (Jamie) and *Tracers* (Little John) and at Dignity Players as Jake in *Stones In His Pocket*. He would like to thank Carol 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 thank you for giving me the greatest treasure of all...twice!!"

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ERIN LEIGH HILL
(Mrs. Daldry)

After a two year absence, Erin is thrilled to return to the Colonial Players stage in *The Vibrator Play*. She has thoroughly enjoyed exploring the role of Mrs. Daldry, and considers it one of the most challenging parts she has ever played. Past credits include Sally in *Cabaret*, Alais in *The Lion in Winter*, Babs in *Mrs. California*, and Sarah in *Earth and Sky*. A reading

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specialist at an elementary school, Erin loves teaching but considers acting her other passion. She is grateful to a wonderful cast and crew, especially Carol for all of her guidance. Erin would also like to send love to her wonderful husband, Dan, who has blessed her life in more ways than anyone can imagine.



SHIRLEY PANEK
(Annie)

This is Shirley's second period-piece with Colonial Players this season. The first was as a Gentlewoman in *A Christmas Carol*. She has dabbled on the production side of some recent Colonial Players shows, including lighting designer for *Trying*, *Moonlight and Magnolias*, and *Chapter Two* (2012 WATCH nominee) and stage manager/costume seamstress for *1776*. But performing on stage is still her favorite, and this show is no exception. Other local productions include *The Unexpected Guest*, *Little Women*, *Lettice and Lovage*, *Private Lives* and *Dog Logic* at Colonial Players and *8 and Sight Unseen* at Dignity Players. "Thanks to the wonderful cast and Carol, for letting us laugh and play together. Love to Drew, Emma, and Jeff - thanks for all your love and support."

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ARICIA SKIDMORE-WILLIAMS
(Elizabeth)

This is Aricia's first production with Colonial Players, and she is beyond thrilled. She was

bitten by the acting bug while appearing as an Oompa Loompa as a freshman at Severna Park High School and is happy to see that, despite a hiatus, she is still absolutely in love with theater. She has had an absolute ball working on this production and has learned so much. Aricia would like to thank Carol many times over for giving her the opportunity to do something she loves so very much. She also is incredibly grateful to the rest of the cast for being so warm and welcoming to her. Lastly, a million thanks to her family, particularly to her parents who have always supported her in whatever ridiculous

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THE STAFF (continued)



JENNIFER DUSTIN
(Lighting Designer)

Jennifer has been involved with Colonial Players for more than a decade, working as a lighting assistant, a lighting designer, and a director. Her design credits at CP include *A Shayna Maidel* and *The Diviners*. Last year, Jennifer directed *Cinderella Waltz*, which received three nominations in the 2012 Washington Area Theatre Community Honors competition. She also has directed three short plays at Colonial Players and has designed lighting for Alchemy Theatre at the Greenbelt Arts Center. Jennifer would like to thank her husband and her parents for their continued love and support.



EDD MILLER
(Set Designer)

Edd has been designing sets for many years for Colonial Players, including the set for *Sunlight*, the second show of the current season. He also has acted in and directed many shows since joining CP in 1964. Edd won the 2012 Washington Area Theatre Community Honors award for best direction of a play for *Going to St. Ives*, which also won awards for best play among the 83 plays judged last year and for best lead actress. Edd also was nominated for The WATCH award for best set decoration for his work on last year's production of *Chapter Two*.



CONNIE ROBINSON
(Properties Designer)

Connie has previously worked as prop assistant to JoAnn Gidos and credits JoAnn as her CP prop-finding "mentor." She also was a Colonial Players marketing assistant from 2003-2005, providing graphic design services for two seasons of programs, introducing color to programs for the first time, and designing newspaper ads and rack cards. Connie also served on the CP Planning Committee with Beth Whaley and has worked in the box office.

Connie appreciates the confidence Carol and Edd had in her, challenging her to "shake the bushes" everywhere for stage props! She thanks her husband, John, for his support and patience.

ANDY SERB
(Sound Designer)

Andy showed up at Colonial Players in May, 2009, and the following day found himself operating the sound system for *Over My Dead Body*. He went on to run sound and lights for *Wonder of the World*, *Little Women*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *1776*, and to design sound for *The Curious Savage*, *Chapter Two*, *Wit*, *Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You* and *The Actor's Nightmare*. Andy's initial experience with sound systems was with churches and bands. While attending the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, CT, he managed sound for the academy's praise band, and was lead sound tech and lighting coordinator for *Anything Goes*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Me and My Girl*, and *Oliver*.



TOM STUCKEY
(Stage Manager)

Tom's involvement with Colonial Players began 44 years ago with an appearance as a member of the chorus of *Carousel*. He gave up acting for the anonymity of offstage work after a sword fell apart piece by piece during a duel in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. He has stage managed and worked the tech booth for many shows over the last 44 years. Tom is CP's vice president and has filled four other board positions. He is editor of the programs for all shows and handles publicity for the Marketing Team.

YOU ARE OUR BEST PR

*If you enjoyed the show, please
recommend it to your friends.*



THE CAST (continued)

adventure she sets out on. She wouldn't be where she is without them and looks forward to keeping them up many more late nights running lines over and over again.



LELIA TAHABURT
(Catherine Givings)

Lelia is happy to rejoin the Colonial Players team after several years away to finish school and to travel. Her previous roles include Babe in *Crimes of the Heart* at the Dignity Players as well as Maureen in *RENT* and Putana in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* at Dartmouth College. Lelia currently works as a math and Arabic tutor when she isn't working in theater. She would like to thank her dog for always being happy to see her when she gets home from rehearsal, and her friends, family, and significant other for being so supportive of her artistic endeavors. Lastly, Lelia thanks the

cast, crew, and artistic team of *In the Next Room* for all of the hard work and fun times.



PAUL VALLEAU
(Leo Irving)

Paul moved to Maryland recently and is thrilled to be cast in his first show at Colonial Players. He appeared in several productions in Iowa and received the award for best actor in a play for his role as Robert in *Don't Dress for Dinner*. Other roles include Leo Bloom in *The Producers*, Kent in *Reasons to be Pretty*, Brandon in *Next Fall*, and Bob Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol*. "I look forward to many amazing adventures with a new theater family. I cannot express enough thanks for the fantastic support of all my friends, my mother, and my beautiful fiancée, Kristi. It is their encouragement that keeps me moving and smiling. Thank you all from the comfort of my heart."



THE STAFF



TERRY AVERILL
(Producer)

Terry has worn many hats at Colonial Players, but this show is his debut as a producer. Terry is now in his second term as president of the Board of Directors. An architect, he has helped plan some of the recent improvements to the theater. Terry has directed four regular season productions for CP, including the opening show for the current season, *Sunlight*, and the popular 2010 musical *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. He recently appeared as Judge James Wilson in our production of *1776*, Terry also is a lighting designer and won a Washington Area Theatre Community Honors award for best lighting design for *Earth and Sky*. He has also directed

and acted in several productions at Bowie Community Theatre.



JULIE BAYS
(Costume Designer)

Julie has enjoyed Colonial Players since she was a child growing up in Annapolis and has always found it to be a great experience working on shows at CP. Favorite shows she costumed for Colonial Players were *Fences*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, and *Little Women*. She has costumed many shows for Children's Theatre of Annapolis and most recently costumed *Oliver* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* at Compass Rose Theater. She is thankful for her supportive family.

THE COLONIAL PLAYERS, INC.
presents



Written by
SARAH RUHL

Directed by
CAROL YOUMANS

THE CAST

(in order of appearance)

Catherine Givings.....Lelia TahaBurt
Dr. Givings.....Ben Carr
Annie.....Shirley Panek
Mr. Daldry.....Mark T. Allen
Mrs. Daldry.....Erin Leigh Hill
Elizabeth.....Aricia Skidmore-Williams
Leo Irving.....Paul Valteau

PLACE

A prosperous spa town outside of New York City,
perhaps Saratoga Springs.

TIME

The dawn of the age of electricity and
after the Civil War, circa 1880s.

Original Broadway Production by Lincoln Center Theater, New York City, 2009.

In the Next Room, or The Vibrator Play was originally commissioned and produced by Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Berkeley, CA.
Tony Taccone, Artistic Director, Susan Medak, Managing Director. *In the Next Room, or The Vibrator Play* was developed at New Dramatists.

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERMISSION BETWEEN ACT I AND ACT II.

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

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