

THE MAN WHO GAVE MASOCHISM ITS NAME

“Man is the one who desires, woman the one who is desired. This is woman’s entire but decisive advantage. Through man’s passions, nature has given man into woman’s hands, and the woman who does not know how to make him her subject, her slave, her toy, and how to betray him with a smile in the end is not wise.”

- Leopold von Sacher-Masoch in *Venus in Furs*.

Sacher-Masoch was a famous author and social reformer in the old kingdom of Galicia, now Poland and western Ukraine, when the word “masochism” first appeared in print in Richard Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis*. This famous forensic work on sexual perversions was published 16 years after *Venus in Furs*, Sacher-Masoch’s exploration of female domination in a sexual relationship, so it is not all that surprising that Krafft-Ebing attached Sacher-Masoch’s name to a sexual preference which the novelist wrote about and practiced. Still, Sacher-Masoch was widely known at the time as a crusader for women’s emancipation and Jewish rights, and he was said to have been aghast that his name was now attached to a sexual preference that was both condemned and derided by society and one that he had not publicly acknowledged.

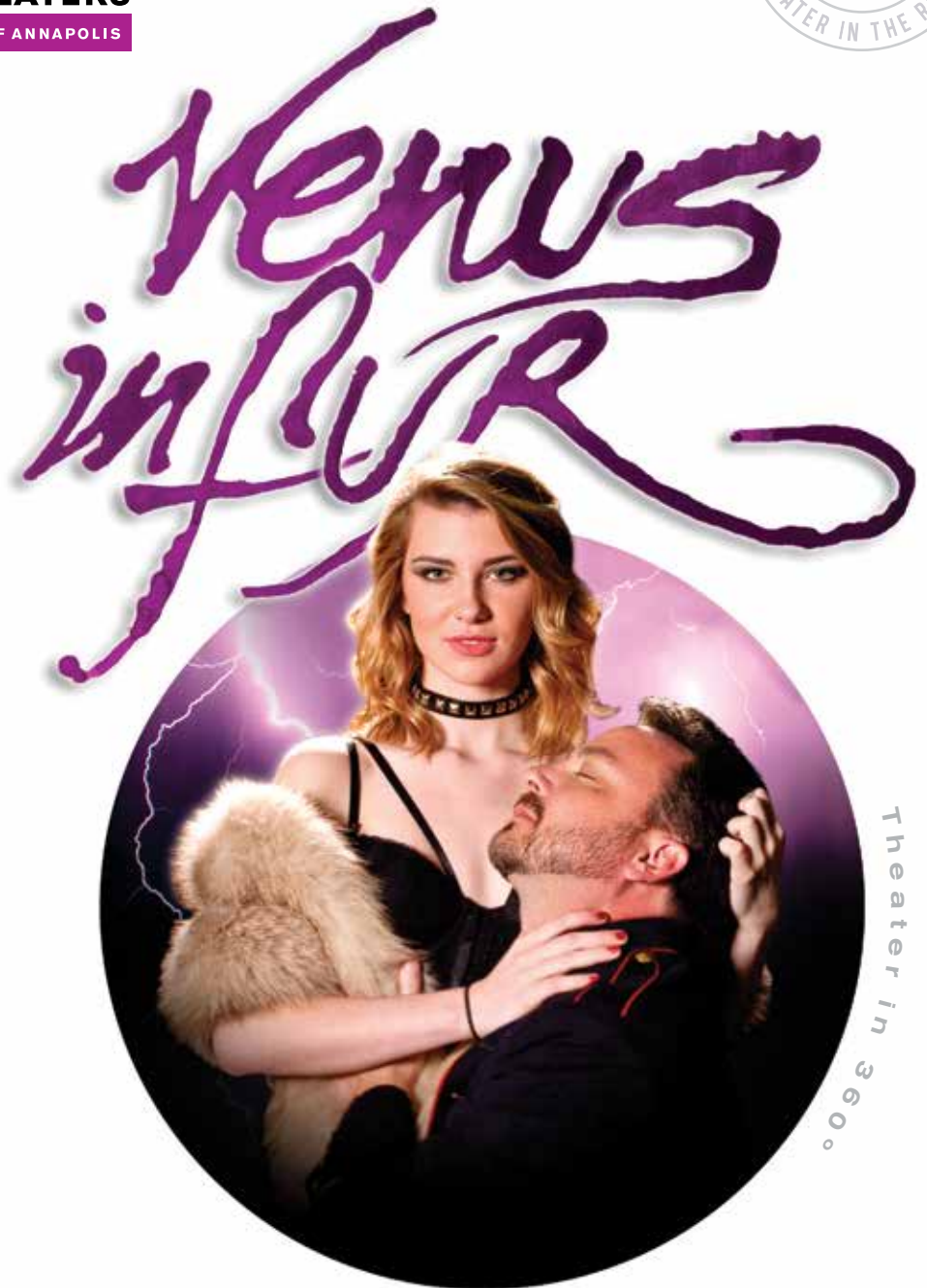
Venus in Furs, the best known of Sacher-Masoch’s works, includes a tale within a tale about a man, Severin, who becomes so infatuated with a woman that he asks to be her slave and encourages her to treat him in progressively more degrading ways. At first, Wanda does not understand Severin’s requests and resists taking part in his sexual games, but as she gradually accedes to his wishes, she begins to enthusiastically embrace his desire to be humiliated and punished while at the same time holding him in disdain for submitting to her control.

“I feel justified in calling this sexual anomaly ‘Masochism’ because the author Sacher-Masoch frequently made this perversion, which up to his time was quite unknown to the scientific world as such, the substratum of his writings,” Krafft-Ebing wrote in response to critics who complained that he had unfairly linked a revered author with a sexual perversion. “As a man, Sacher-Masoch cannot lose anything in the estimation of his cultured fellow-beings simply because he was afflicted with an anomaly of his sexual feelings.” However, he acknowledged the harm to Sacher-Masoch’s reputation as an author, calling him a gifted writer who would have achieved greatness had he been governed by normal sexual feelings. “In this respect he is a remarkable example of the powerful influence exercised by the *vita sexualis* be it in the good or evil sense over the formation and direction of man’s mind,” Krafft-Ebing wrote.

Venus in Furs is one of only two of Sacher-Masoch’s works translated into English, but it has had a modest influence on popular American culture. The play by David Ives, who changed “furs” to fur” for his title, is one of two stage productions. The novel has been adapted for film several times, including movies in 1967, 1969, and in 1985 as a lesbian-feminist interpretation titled, *Seduction: The Cruel Woman*. Most recently famed director Roman Polanski turned the Ives play into a movie.

In the novel, Sacher-Masoch offers his own justification for sexual preferences outside the norm: “The individual who rebels against the arrangements of society is ostracized, branded, stoned. So be it. I am willing to take the risk; my principles are very pagan. I will live my own life as it pleases me. I am willing to do without your hypocritical respect; I prefer to be happy.”

Sources: Wikipedia, The New York Times, The Guardian.





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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"... this is a building and a city made of more than bricks and mortar. It is a community."

— Annapolis Yacht Club Commodore Rod Jabin

For 67 years The Colonial Players have been proud to call Annapolis home. And when, just a month ago, another local stalwart fell victim to a horrific fire, the response made us even more proud to be part of this generous, unique community.

The Annapolis Yacht Club predates Colonial by 63 years, tracing its roots back to 1886. It has been a central part of the community ever since — a headquarters for the Annapolis sailing scene, but also the site of many joyful events over the decades. I spend all of my spare time making plays, not sailing, so I'm drawn to membership at CP, rather than AYC. But through happenstance and invitation it was my pleasure to dine twice recently at the yacht club. My 30-year-old book group gathered there just five days before the fire for our annual feast and book swap; Jim and I enjoyed a beautiful Thanksgiving dinner at the club as guests of my sister and brother-in-law. The highlight of each? The talented, friendly staff, and that jaw-dropping view of this incredible city and waterway (and my dinner companions, of course!). The Saturday of the fire we were on Main Street with hordes of other Christmas shoppers when the bright December sky darkened with thick black smoke and the air filled with the wailing of sirens. Our first thought after learning the staff was safe: now what will they do, out of work during the busiest time of the year? And that's where the community did itself proud.

From local hotels offering space for events to continue, to restaurants and other businesses offering to hire the 150 out-of-work staffers over the holidays, Annapolis showed that being a community is about more than bricks and mortar. The physical effects of the fire will be erased by rebuilding; the spiritual and emotional effects of the response will enrich our community for years to come. The Players are happily at home in this community that honors it's history, takes pride in it's maritime roots, and embraces the arts.

— DARICE CLEWELL

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

In *Venus in Fur*, the character Vanda says: “In our society, a woman’s only power is through men... I want to see what Woman will be when she ceases to be men’s slave. When she has the same rights as he, when she’s his equal in education and his partner in work. When she becomes herself. An individual.”

To which Thomas responds: “Women’s rights... yadda yadda.”

A modern man like Thomas (whose fiancé is a high-powered business woman) might think that the fight for woman’s rights is irrelevant. Yet at a time when a woman CEO is still viewed as an exception to the norm, Thomas’ smug response is myopic and suggests an obliviousness to his own privilege. Not only is Thomas’ worldview seldom challenged, but as a writer, his views are celebrated and disseminated. In *Venus in Fur* this paradigm is called into question. Vanda is an out-of-work actress who questions the power structure and challenges the “normal” order. Throughout the play, the actress attempts to turn the tables on the playwright/director, challenging his art, his views – his identity as a man. The conflict escalates, power shifts back and forth between Thomas and Vanda, and this game of cat-and-mouse culminates in a dramatically decisive conclusion.

The play *Venus in Fur*, written by David Ives in 2011, uses a 19th-century novel of the same name as a main source. Written by Leopold von Sacher-Masoch in 1870, the novel is a story of

sexual domination and submission. In fact the term ‘masochism’ is derived from the author’s name. Despite its connection to the novel, however, the play is not about sexual bondage. The playwright uses the familiar director/actress relationship to examine themes of dominance and submission; and in so doing, he is able to address larger issues concerning social power dynamics between men and women. Bondage becomes a metaphor for power vs. powerlessness.

The play references Titian’s painting *Venus with Mirror*. In art, literature, and theater, men have created the persona of Venus, assigning her an identity and providing her voice. Men have controlled Venus’ “brand” since the beginning. Female identity is intrinsically linked to the male gaze: a man painted *Venus with Mirror*, a man wrote the novel *Venus in Furs*, and a man wrote the play *Venus in Fur*; and lest you think that this phenomenon is a thing of the past, a man directed tonight’s performance. Even a work of art that criticizes the male power structure is controlled by men!

Venus in Fur is a funny, mysterious, quasi-erotic drama that questions gender roles and power. Looking deeper through its many layers, *Venus in Fur* is also a cautionary parable about the dangers of ignoring what is right in front of you. So WILL a woman finally take control of her own identity? We shall see...!

– JIM GALLAGHER

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



JIM GALLAGHER’S last directing gig was *Becky’s New Car* at Bay Theatre Company. The last show he directed at Colonial Players was *Frozen* in 2010. Other shows directed at CP: *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well* and *Living in Paris* (1999), *Lost in Yonkers* (1996), *Rebel Armies Deep Into Chad* (1993), and *The Nightingale and Not the Lark* (One Act 1991). He also co-directed *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1998) and *Anything Goes* (1997) for Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre. CP audiences saw him on the stage

earlier this season in *Sherlock’s Last Case*. Other CP shows include *Rabbit Hole*, *Hogan’s Goat*, *Cabaret*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *The Boys Next Door*, *Anne of the Thousand Days*, *All My Sons*, and *The Elephant Man*. He also appeared in *Twelfth Night* at The Shakespeare Theatre; *Doubt*, *Blue Orange*, *Art*, and *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* at Dignity Players; *Copenhagen*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and *The Cripple of Inishmaan* for Theatre Hopkins. He studied at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London and in Washington, DC at the The Shakespeare Theatre, Studio Theatre, and Source Theatre.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

DAVID IVES is a contemporary American author with almost 50 plays to his credit. He is best known for his short comedic plays and for longer plays that are adaptations of earlier literary works. Ives wrote his first play at age 9 or 10; he determined he wanted to be a playwright at age 17 when he saw a production of Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance* starring Hume Cronyn and Jessica Tandy. After graduating from Northwestern University in 1971, he moved to New York City and began his writing career. He had some success in the 1980s with productions of several of his short plays at theaters around town, but his career didn't take off until 1993 when he combined six of those short plays into an evening of theater titled *All in the Timing*, a surprise hit that ran for 606 performances. Ives

has found success using French and German books as sources for his plays. "I like drawing on something pre-existing because plot is hard for me," he said in a 2013 interview with *Playbill*. "If somebody else can hand me the lineaments of a story and I can proceed from there, so much the better as far as I'm concerned." An 1870 German novel, *Venus in Furs*, was the inspiration for *Venus in Fur*. (Ives dropped the "s" from furs for his play title.) A 17th century French farce was the basis for *The Liar*, a favorite with CP audiences last season and winner of the 2014 Ruby Griffith Award for best all around production by Washington-area community theaters. (You can see the impressive Ruby Griffith trophy in the display case at the foot of the stairs in the lobby.)

ABOUT OUR NEXT PLAY

Boeing Boeing is a classic farce written by French playwright Marc Camoletti and translated into English by Beverly Cross and Francis Evans. The London production opened in 1962 and was a huge hit, running for seven years. The first Broadway production had only a short run, but the play found much more success with critics and audiences and ran for 279 performances when it was revived on Broadway in 2008. Set in the 1960s — before sexual dynamics between men and women were changed by feminism — it features Bernard, an American who successfully juggles his relationships with three airline stewardesses until schedule changes cause them to descend on his Paris

apartment at the same time. Aided by his housekeeper and a male friend, plus a set full of doors, Bernard desperately tries to keep the women separated, ushering them in and out of rooms as his whole charade falls apart. *New York Times* critic Ben Brantley wrote of the New York revival: "*Boeing Boeing* ... has no earthly right to be as funny as it is." The play's appeal is the opposite of what one might expect of a sex comedy about a cad engaged to three women, Brantley wrote; "It's not smutty at all. It's deliciously, deliriously innocent." *Boeing Boeing* runs February 19 - March 12. Tickets are available at thecolonialplayers.org or by calling 410-268-7373.



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the years, he did lighting design for *Kid Purple*, *Cabaret*, *Jacques Brel*, and *Angel Street* and designed lighting and sets for *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* and *The Lion in Winter*. He appeared on stage in productions of *Rebecca*, *The Clearing*, various years of *A Christmas Carol*, and *Broadway Bound*. He directed *A Voice of the Prairie* and *A Christmas Carol* for CP and *The Vagina Monologues* for Dignity Players. In the film world, he helped produce the documentary film *Anthem* for MYMMedia, which aired nationally on PBS, and is helping to produce their next project, *Patterson & Bonaparte*. He would like to thank Mickey, his husband of 23 amazing years, for his endless support.



KAELLYNN MILLER
(Costume Designer)

Kaelynn returns to the world of costume design after spending about two years working in other production areas. She has been involved with many shows over the last seven seasons, both on the stage and off, in a variety of roles from actress to orphan wrangler to go-button pusher to floor painter to last-minute button sewer to Looney Tunes sound effect specialist to smushed-banana cleaner. Previous costume design credits at CP include *Shipwrecked!* (2014 WATCH award nominee for costume design), *Company*, and *Inventing van Gogh*. At CP, Kaelynn serves as Treasurer and Membership Chair. She pays her bills by working as a customer service representative in the music industry, which actually sort of relates to her Bachelor's degree in Music and Vocal Performance. Love to Wes.



SHIRLEY PANEK
(Stage Manager)

After performing as Louise in last year's *Rocket Man* at Colonial Players, Shirley took some time off to plan and produce a wedding with her real-life leading man, Jeff Mocho. She now steps backstage as stage manager for this provocative show. Previous production credits at Colonial Players include stage managing *1776* and *Bat Boy* and designing lights for *Communicating Doors*,

Chapter Two (2012 WATCH lighting award conominee), *Moonlight and Magnolias*, *Trying*, and *A Few Good Men*. Shirley would like to thank Jim for his dedication and trusting her with his amazing cast, Jason for his organization skills and attention to detail, and the rest of the production staff for all their hard work. Break a leg, Natalie! Try not to break Jeff. Love to Jeff, Drew, and Emma.



RICARDO SEIJO
(Set Designer)

Ricardo was born in Puerto Rico, where he began his career in set design staging elaborate Star Wars action scenes using LEGOs, sleeping bags, laundry detergent powder, and dominoes. He graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in architecture and now spends much of his waking life designing schools with Grimm + Parker Architects. He is a founding member of 4 Point Design Collective, with which he collaborated on the sets for *August: Osage County* and *The Full Monty* for The Keegan Theater in Washington, DC. He is new to The Colonial Players, but is looking forward to new opportunities for camaraderie with the talented and dedicated group he's found here. He'd like to thank the Venus team for this opportunity, the red chair for keeping quiet, and Mander for the morning bedspread laughs.



JASON VAUGHAN
(Producer)

Jason is delighted to be working again with Colonial Players, this time as producer of *Venus in Fur*. In past years, he's worked "behind the curtain" as a one-act play director, assistant director, and playwright. He has previously appeared on the stage in performances with Colonial, Dignity Players of Annapolis, and Spotlights Theater of Baltimore. Jason also serves on Colonial's long-range planning and nominations committees and is busily working on the lobby display for CP's next show, *Boeing Boeing*. Jason thanks Scott for all his patience and support.



THE CAST



JEFF MOCHO
(Thomas)

Jeff is excited to return to Colonial Players and have the opportunity to work with Jim and Natalie in such an intense show.

The torture of rehearsal has been exquisite. Previously at Colonial Players, he appeared as the judge and understudy for Lt. Kaffe in *A Few Good Men*, as Reece in *Communicating Doors*, and Michael Starkwedder in *The Unexpected Guest*, when he met and fell in love with leading lady Shirley Panek. Thanks to Shirley, Drew, and Emma for being your fantastic selves and for welcoming me into the family. Lots of love to Mom and Dad, who are coming all the way from Albuquerque to see the show.



NATALIE NANKERVIS
(Vanda)

Natalie Nankervis is thrilled to return for her third show at Colonial Players. You may have seen her as Alice in last season's production of *Ernest in Love*. She spent this past summer in New York studying the Meisner acting technique at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Her favorite roles include Widow Corney in *Oliver!* and Ginette in *Almost, Maine*. The role of Vanda has given her the opportunity to explore her range as an actor, and she feels honored to bring this magnificent character to life. She'd like to thank Jim for taking a chance on a passionate young actress who simply adores this play. She'd also like to thank her parents — Mrs. R, Mr. M, and Julian — for their constant support. Hail, Aphrodite!



THE STAFF



MARY BUTCHER
(Floor Designer, Floor and Set Painting)

This is Mary's second show at Colonial Players since she moved here in August. She finds

it's always fun and exciting to make a space look like a dirty, gnarly warehouse and was thrilled to have that opportunity with this show, thanks to Rico's kickass design. Thanks to everyone at CP who has already made her feel like part of the CP family. She is looking forward to many more repaints of the stage with future shows.



BEN CORNWELL
(Sound Designer)

Ben 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 has been nominated twice 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.



JOANN GIDOS AND MIKE GIDOS
(Properties Designers, Set Decoration)

JoAnn and her husband and assistant, Mike, are supporting their second consecutive production at Colonial Players after having designed props for *Morning's at Seven*. Recently they also supported *Brigadoon* at Compass Rose Theater and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Severn School. Over the years they have worked on many productions at Bay Theatre, Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre, and other companies in the Annapolis area. While JoAnn represents the artistic side of the effort, Mike does the research, searching out and locating often hard-to-find props. In addition, Mike often is the go-to guy for weapons and special effects. Among their favorites are *Candide*, *Assassins*, *Trying*, *Shipwrecked!*, *Moonlight and Magnolias*, and *The Price*.



ERIC LUND
(Lighting Designer)

Eric is fresh off designing lights for the Colonial Players production of *Side Man*. Over

THE COLONIAL PLAYERS, INC.
presents



Written by
DAVID IVES

Directed by
JIM GALLAGHER

THE CAST
(in order of appearance)

Thomas.....Jeff Mocho
Vanda.....Natalie Nankervis

TIME
The present

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Venus in Fur will be performed without an intermission.

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