
A LESSON IN BRAVERY: College Students Risked Their Lives to Oppose Hitler

In the summer of 1942, Adolf Hitler held absolute power in Germany, waging war abroad and using his Nazi Party to carry out a murderous campaign at home to rid the country of Jews and other minorities, while brutally crushing even the slightest hint of opposition to his regime. Despite the dangers, a group consisting mostly of university students in Munich formed White Rose, a non-violent organization that founders hoped would build a passive resistance movement that would counter Hitler's worst excesses and help restore democracy to their country.

The characters you will see in Lillian Garrett-Groag's play are based on real-life young people who were the core founders of White Rose. They subjected themselves to the possibility of torture and death by disseminating anonymous leaflets calling for restoration of freedom and security for the German people.

Among the older members of the Munich group was Liselotte Furst-Ramdohr, 29, whose husband had died in battle on the Russian front. In a 2013 interview with *Witness* magazine, a BBC publication, the 99-year-old Furst-Ramdohr remembered the activists as young and naive. "I can still see Alex today as he told me about it," she recalled. "He never said the word 'resistance,' he just said that the war was dreadful, with the battles and so many people dying, and that Hitler was a megalomaniac, and so they had to do something."

The founders of White Rose included Sophie Scholl and her brother Hans, Alex Schmorell, Christopher Probst, and Wilhelm Graf, all characters in *The White Rose*. Sophie later became one of the best-known members of the group and was the subject of an Oscar-nominated film, *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days*. Furst-Ramdohr remembered that Sophie was so scared that she would sleep in her brother's bed. "Hans was very afraid too, but they wanted to keep going for Germany - they loved their country," she recalled.

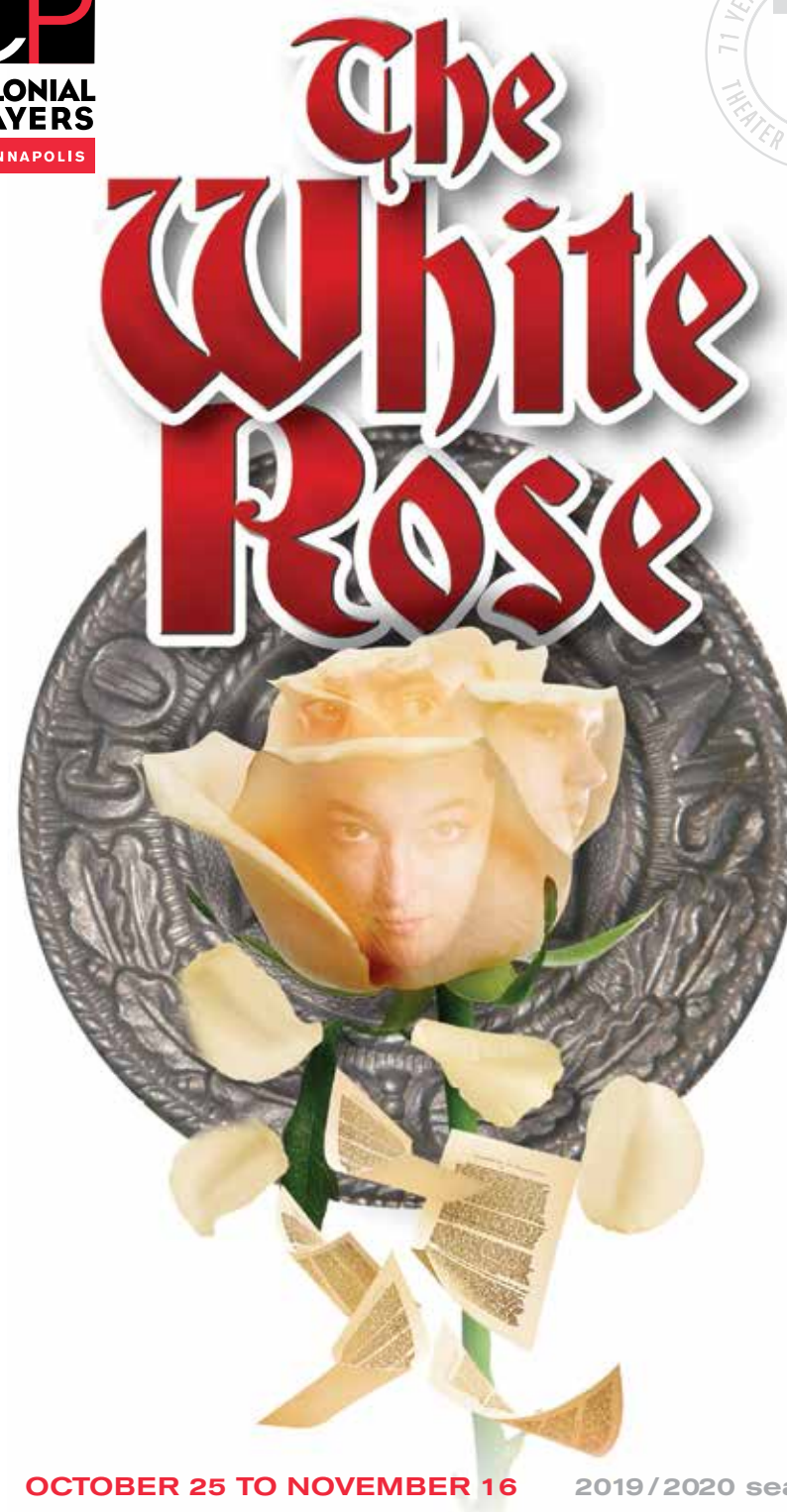
The main activity of White Rose was to distribute leaflets asking Germans to join together to resist Hitler and Nazism. Munich was the primary distribution point, but bundles were sent to sympathizers in other cities.

The end of White Rose came in February, 1943, when Sophie and Hans were caught distributing copies of the sixth leaflet at the University of Munich. A caretaker saw papers floating down from a stairwell and called the Gestapo. Panic spread when White Rose members learned of the arrests. Some went underground or fled the country and were able to escape. Others were caught and executed.

Furst-Ramdohr was one of the lucky ones, even though she was arrested on March 2. "Two Gestapo men came to the flat and they turned everything upside down," she said in the interview with *Witness* magazine. They released her after one month, but agents followed her for months afterward, hoping she would lead them to others who were involved in the anti-Hitler movement.

White Rose is remembered and admired today for the bravery displayed by a few students who stood up for freedom against the immense power of the Nazi government. Schmorell was made a saint by the Russian Orthodox church in 2010. Furst-Ramdohr said he would have laughed at the honor. "He wasn't a saint. He was just a normal person."

The final White Rose leaflet was smuggled out of Germany and intercepted by Allied forces, with the result that, in the autumn of 1943, millions of copies were dropped over Germany by Allied aircraft.



OCTOBER 25 TO NOVEMBER 16 2019/2020 season



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to The Colonial Players!

Often in these president's messages I talk about our volunteers and the work they do inside the theater. They are invaluable to this little community of players – and without them, we wouldn't be able to put on the wonderful productions we do.

But I wanted to take a moment to talk a little about the ways we give back to our community. Every year, as president, I'm fortunate to be able to designate a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization for a donation from our annual budget. Some of these organizations are small and some are arts-related, but all are local and working within our area to help those who need a helping hand.

At our most recent general membership meeting, I was pleased to present the Anne Arundel County Food Bank with a \$3,000 donation. (New fact I learned - \$1 = 8 pounds of food for the food bank). The food bank helped over 62,000 households in Anne Arundel County last year. And they provide more than food for families in need. They are responsible for providing medical equipment, senior assistance, bikes, and more to families and individuals across Anne Arundel County and the state – at no cost to its participants.

We're not yet hearing the clanging of bells asking for donations – but I encourage you to see if there's a way you can give back to your community and those around you throughout all the seasons. Whether it's a donation to a local food bank, reading to children at your neighborhood school, or mentoring a young person – you can make a difference.

We at The Colonial Players are fortunate that we are able to turn our passion for theater into philanthropic work. Thank you for helping us make the world around us a better place to live and play.

– SHIRLEY PANEK

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Director.....Alex Brady
Assistant Director.....Janice Coffey
Producer.....Dona Weingarten
Stage Manager.....Andy McLendon
Stage Crew.....Kris Brown
Set Designers.....Alex Brady, Tom Gross
Lighting Designer.....Ernie Morton
Costume Designer.....Carrie Brady
Sound Designer.....Bill Reinhardt
Properties Designer.....Maureen Mitchell
Lead Carpenter.....Ted Yablonski
Carpenters.....Tom Dicken, Ken Kaiser, Norm James, Bob Mumper, Jim Robinson
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Hadlee Walker, Aaron Vonderharr
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Ed Lyon • Jan Dirk Rosche • Thea Lindauer
SIX2SIX Society Vintage Clothing
Professor Sean Urbantke and Anne Arundel Community College students
for construction of railings



Many thanks to Parlights, Inc. for exceptional technical support.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."

- From a speech by John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 1961

"If you are aware of this, why do you not stir yourselves? Why do you permit this autocrat to rob you of one sphere of your rights after another, little by little, both overtly and in secret?"

- The White Rose, Leaflet 3, 1942

During our rehearsal process for *The White Rose*, I was asked, "Why did the Scholl siblings and their friends choose to die for their ideals?" I am certain that the answer to this question is central to the effort we have put into this production. It is also central to our understanding of the actions taken by members of *Die Weisse Rose* in Munich in 1942 and 1943.

I know this because during World War II, my grandfather was a 17-year-old sailor on the *Kriegsmarine* destroyer "Wilhelm Heidkamp", which ran aground after the Battle of Narvik in 1940. My grandmother, who passed away in June, was a 12-year-old *Hitlerjugend* Girl Scout in 1943. My family and I, along with many other Germans, live with the cultural shame and guilt of events that took place long before we were born. Because of this, I can't help but keep returning to the question, "What would I have done?"

We all want to believe that we are as brave and strong in our convictions as Sophie and Hans Scholl; Dietrich Bonhoeffer; or Oskar Schindler.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR



ALEX BRADY is making his main season directorial debut for The Colonial Players with *The White Rose*. He has previously performed onstage in several roles, most recently as Macbeth

with The Theatre at AACC. Brady is a critically acclaimed lighting designer with more than 15 years of experience working with professional, academic, and community theaters across Maryland, Northern Virginia, and Washington D.C. He has been nominated for multiple awards for his inventive and subtle approach to lighting. Brady is

These amazing people chose to sacrifice their lives and livelihoods for their principles. Sophie, Hans, and Pastor Bonhoeffer were executed. Schindler lived in poverty on the charity of those he saved until his death in 1974.

In spite of this, we can't help but find something in common with our Gestapo policeman, Robert Mohr. Like him, we want to get by; do our jobs; keep our families safe; and remain modestly successful. We want to go home and fix our garden gate to keep the troubles of the world out of our homes. "Politicians are all crooks," we say. "I don't mind people who aren't like me," we say. "The system is broken," we say. Too often this is all the opposition that we muster.

I can't speak for you, but I fear that I might be a good man who does nothing. In the end, each of us must choose for ourselves: to sit quietly or stand in the face of overwhelming opposition, even if we are the only ones standing.

"Why did the Scholl siblings and their friends choose to die for their ideals?" In a corrupt courtroom in 1943, certain of her death sentence and surrounded by Gestapo and Nazi officials, a brave 21-year-old woman gave us the only answer that we should ever need: "Well, somebody had to make a start."

— ALEX BRADY

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



The Colonial Players gratefully acknowledges the recent gift from the Donald M. Reed Living Trust that made possible the critical upgrade of our stage lighting control system.



THE CAST



TYLER HEROUX

(Christopher Probst)

Tyler has been acting in theater since his sophomore year in high school. Shows include Mr. Green in *Clue*, Bruno/Louis in *Shipwrecked! An Entertainment -- The Amazing Adventures of Louis de Rougemont*, Claudio in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and, most recently, Peter Shaw in *Silent Sky* at The Colonial Players. He won the 2017 Baltimore Cappie Award for Best Supporting Actor in a Play and hopes to continue his theater dreams for many years to come. He is immensely thankful to his family and friends who have always been there to support him.



MATT LEYENDECKER

(Anton Mahler)

Matt is pleased to appear in-the-round for the second time at The Colonial Players. He last appeared as Sir John Falstaff in CP's production of *The Merry Wives Of Windsor*. He has also performed in several other local productions, such as BCT's *Becky's New Car* (2018 WATCH Nomination, Best Featured Actor in a Play), LMP's *An Inspector Calls*, Vagabond Players' *Inherit the Wind*, and PGLT's *The Mousetrap* and *A Shot In The Dark*. He is blessed to have the support of family and friends, most notably his fiancé, who has been a light shining through the darkness.



JOE MARIANO

(Robert Mohr)

Joe previously appeared at The Colonial Players as George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (WATCH award, best actor).

Other notable roles include Beethoven in *33 Variations* and Thomas Putnam in *The Crucible*, both at Silver Spring Stage; Atticus Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird* and George Bailey in *It's A Wonderful Life* at Laurel Mill Playhouse. Joe also appeared as the Padre in *Man of LaMancha*, Giuseppe Zangara in *Assassins*, the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, the Sergeant in Chesapeake Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Steve

Hubbel in *A Streetcar Named Desire* at The Arlington Players, and Don Juan in *Don Juan in Hell*.



NICHOLAS MARTINEZ

(Hans Scholl)

Nicholas is a recent college graduate and new resident of Annapolis, and this is his first performance outside of school.

He is really excited to perform for you, and he would like to thank his family and friends for showing him constant support and care throughout the process of the show. Nicholas hopes you enjoy the show!



SAM MORTON

(Alexander Schmorell)

Between his CP debut at 12 in *The Curious Savage* and his more recent roles in *A Few Good Men* and the one-act *Quiche*

Isn't Sexy, Sam has been busy studying English at the University of Rochester in New York. He is very proud that *The White Rose* is his first show after graduating and returning home to Annapolis. He would like to thank his family for their unfailing support and for enabling his theater addiction, and he hopes the audience will appreciate this haunting, moving play that our cast and crew have been working tirelessly on for the past several months.



DEVIN THRASHER

(Sophie Scholl)

Devin recently graduated from the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business with a degree in

accounting. She spent most of her academic career performing with The Maryland Shakespeare Players in roles such as Friar Lawrence in *Romeo & Juliet* and Rosalind in *As You Like It*. She took a year's hiatus from the theater to work for the entertainment department at Walt Disney World, but is eager to return with such a talented team.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

LILLIAN GARRETT-GROAG is a native of Argentina who built a long career in the United States as an actress, director, and playwright. She attended colleges in Illinois and Dijon, France, before earning masters and doctoral degrees in Romance languages at Northwestern University. While appearing in a production of *The Lion in Winter* at Northwestern, she was spotted by a talent scout who persuaded her to move to Hollywood to pursue an acting career in movies and television. After a few guest appearances on TV shows, Ms. Garrett-

Groag shifted her focus to live theater, and she has written, acted, and directed for many regional theaters, including Baltimore's Center Stage. She was part of an ensemble cast in *The Kentucky Cycle* performed at the Kennedy Center and on Broadway. Her father was a member of an aristocratic Viennese family that opposed the Nazis and fled to Argentina in 1938 when Hitler annexed Austria. Ms. Garrett-Groag said it was the memory of her father, who died when she was just 14, that inspired her to write *The White Rose*.

ABOUT OUR NEXT PLAY

The annual small-town Christmas pageant promises to be like none other for six reasons -- the six Herdman children. The Herdmans are notorious in their community for bad behaviors such as smoking cigars, cussing, drinking wine, and even shoplifting. Now they want to be in the church pageant, and disaster seems to be in the offing. Our December production, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, is a delightful comedy by Barbara Robinson based on what happens when the kids decide that not only do they want to be in the play, they want all the best parts. Since they've bullied other children into not auditioning, they wind up as Mary and Joseph and the wise men and the angel. Everyone is sure this year's pageant will be a disaster. The children came to Sunday school only because they heard snacks were being passed out. But knowing nothing about religion or the story of Jesus allows them to bring a unique and not altogether unwelcome perspective to the pageant. Gladys patterns the angel after a comic book character; the Wise Men bring a ham to baby Jesus instead of "crummy" frankincense and myrrh. Despite expectations that the pageant will be a calamity, adults and the other children begin to see the Christmas story in a new light, and by common agreement, they decide it is the best Christmas pageant the town has ever had.

The special holiday production is not part of the regular season, and tickets (\$15 adults, \$10 students 17 and under) may be purchased at any time at thecolonialplayers.org or by calling 410-268-7373. The show runs for 14 performances December 5-15.



THE STAFF (continued)



ANDY MCLENDON
(Stage Manager)

Working with the talented cast and staff of *The White Rose* combines two of Andy's favorite pastimes: theater and history. *The White Rose* is the latest of many productions that Andy has stage managed since she first became involved with CP in the 1970s. She was last seen in her SM shirt with the production of the one act series, "Generations." Other memorable productions with The Colonial Players include *Casa Valentina*, *Calender Girls*, *The Secret Garden*, *Morning's at Seven*, *Closer Than Ever*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Enter the Guardsman*, *Cabaret*, and *Blood Brothers*. Andy has volunteered for a number of jobs at CP, including conducting stage manager workshops.



MAUREEN MITCHELL
(Properties Designer)

Maureen is excited about working with the CP production team of *The White Rose* as a first-time properties designer. She was costume designer for CP's summer "Generations" series of short plays and has worked on other CP productions. She is a graduate of Boston College, with a BA in Communications and Theatre, and has participated in the "From Page to Stage" production program at the Kennedy Center. Maureen has worked in radio news, TV engineering and operations, advertising, newspapers, and publishing, and also loves to perform. She has been seen in shows with ASGT, 2nd Star, Opera AACC, and "Broadway in Annapolis" shows produced by Live Arts Maryland. Her acting highlights include work as a TV extra with Viola Davis on the "How to Get Away with Murder" pilot and acting workshops at HB Studio in New York. She sang solo with church groups, performed at The White House during Christmas, and sang with a Capitol Hill Chorale tour in Prague, the Czech Republic, and Wittenberg, Germany. Maureen sings with the Annapolis Chorale and has previously performed with the Congressional Chorus and Hexagon, Inc. She recently completed her paralegal certification and presently studies voice at the Peabody

Preparatory. She thanks director Alex Brady, the wonderful production team, CP officers, our loyal audiences, and her family for their unwavering support. "The time is now!"



ERNIE MORTON
(Lighting Designer)

Ernie is back as lighting designer for *The White Rose* after designing lights for last season's productions of *Silent Sky* and *Towards Zero* at The Colonial Players and *Songs for a New World* at Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre. He has also stage managed a dozen shows at CP, most recently *A Christmas Carol* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.



BILL REINHARDT
(Sound Designer)

Bill started in theatrical sound and lighting at community theaters in 1999, and most recently was the sound designer for *Mamma Mia* at Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre and the designer for *Rumors* at The Colonial Players. He owned a professional sound and video company for ten years and enjoys the arts throughout the area. He is thrilled to be collaborating on *The White Rose* with such a talented team, and looks forward to many more years working on theatrical sound and lighting.



DONA WEINGARTEN
(Producer)

Dona has managed two Colonial Players' Promising Playwright Contests, the most recent of which progressed to a world premier summer production of *Job Loss Figures* by 2017 contest winner Andrea Fleck Clardy. Prior to becoming a very busy teacher (grades 6-12) for 30 years, Dona worked behind the scenes at Montgomery Players, Silver Spring Stage, and Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre as a lighting designer and technician. She is excited about working with the very talented staff and cast of *The White Rose*, an important play about young Germans' resistance to Adolf Hitler during World War II.



THE CAST (continued)



AARON VONDERHARR
(Bauer)

Aaron is just happy to be here. Most recently appearing in *Towards Zero* as Thomas Royde at The Colonial Players, he intended the next show to be something a bit more lighthearted, such as a comedy or a musical. And yet here we are. Thanks as always go to the production staff, fellow actors, and all the adoring fans who don't know it yet.



HADLEE WALKER
(Wilhelm Graf)

Hadlee is a senior at Broadneck High School. This is his first show at The Colonial Players, and he is very excited about this opportunity. He enjoys tech and acting, and he has learned so much by doing both. Hadlee was nominated by the Baltimore Cappies for best comedic actor in a play. He is overjoyed to have such an amazing cast to work with and hang out with. He hopes to study theater and musical theater in college and is looking forward to working with such talented people in the future.



THE STAFF



CARRIE BRADY
(Costume Designer)

Carrie is happy to be costuming for The Colonial Players again after costuming *Sherlock's Last Case* (WATCH Award nominated), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *City of Conversation*, *33 Variations* (WATCH Award nominated), and last season's *Silent Sky*. Previously, she costumed for Spirited Productions, the Moonlight Troupers/The Theatre at AACC, and Bay Theatre Company. In addition to wardrobe, Carrie appeared on stage in *Shiloh Rules* at The Colonial Players, and has enjoyed helping out with sets at her alma mater, St. Mary's High School Theater. All this theater fun gives Carrie something to do when she's not working at the library of the Department of Legislative Services. With love and gratitude to Alex; *ich bin stolz auf dich*.



JANICE COFFEY
(Assistant Director)

Janice has produced, stage managed, and worked as a set designer and props mistress for several shows for Bowie Community Theatre and Greenbelt Arts Center. She is also a professional actor, having performed in film, TV, and theatrical productions



TOM GROSS
(Set Co-Designer)

Tom is honored to be part of this production of *The White Rose*. His stagecraft experience has principally been in stage set piece planning and construction. Previous production credits include: *Grease*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Crazy for You*, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, *The Wiz*, *Oliver*, *Into the Woods*, *Legally Blonde*, and *The Great Gatsby* with Saint Mary's High School Drama Club; *Last Rights* and *The Appeal* with Spirited Productions in Annapolis; and a bit of set furniture repair for *Sherlock Holmes' Last Case* with The Colonial Players. He thanks Alex for this opportunity to return to the backstage haunts. He is especially grateful to his wife, Maryanne, for her patient tolerance of his pursuit of this avocation.

THE COLONIAL PLAYERS, INC.
presents



Written by
LILLIAN GARRETT-GROAG

Directed by
ALEX BRADY

THE CAST
(in order of appearance)

Anton Mahler.....Matt Leyendecker
Sophie Scholl.....Devin Thrasher
Hans SchollNicholas Martinez
Robert Mohr.....Joe Mariano
Bauer.....Aaron Vonderharr
Alexander Schmorell.....Sam Morton
Wilhelm Graf.....Hadlee Walker
Christopher Probst.....Tyler Heroux

TIME AND PLACE
Munich, 1942-43

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

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