

A Play by **Romulus Linney**Based on the Novel by **Ernest J. Gaines**



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presents

A Lesson BEFORE DYING

A Play by **Romulus Linney**Based on the Novel by **Ernest J. Gaines**

Directed by Andrea J. Dymond

Scenic Design **Henry Wilkinson** Costume Design
Olivia Trees

Lighting Design

Maranda DeBusk

Sound Design Mike Ponder Stage Manager
Ross Jackson *

Producing Artistic Director **Calvin MacLean**

Managing Director **David Bryant Byrd**

New York premiere produced by Signature Theatre Company, New York City James Houghton, Founding Artistic Director Bruce Whitacre, Managing Director

A LESSON BEFORE DYING was commissioned by the Alabama Shakespeare Festival Kent Thompson, Artistic Director Montgomery, Alabama

A LESSON BEFORE DYING is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.



National Endowment for the Arts Mildred Haines and William Elijah Morris Lecture Endowment Fund













[†] The Stage Manager appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Romulus Linney

omulus Linney was the author of three novels, four opera librettos, 20 short stories, and 85 plays which have been staged throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia. His plays include *The Sorrows of Frederick*, *Holy* Ghosts, Childe Byron, Heathen Valley, 2, and an adaptation of Ernest L. Gaines's novel A Lesson Before Dying, which has been produced in New York and in numerous regional theaters. Linney wrote a libretto for an opera based on his first play *The Sorrows of Frederick*, with music by Scott Wheeler, commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera and Lincoln Center Theater. His last play, Over Martinis, Driving Somewhere, received a workshop at New York Stage and

Film and was published in the September 2011 issue of *American Theatre* magazine. Among Linney's many awards were two Obie awards. one for sustained excellence in playwriting; two National Critics Awards; three Drama-Logue Awards; and fellowships from the Guggenheim and Rockefeller foundations and the New York Foundation for the Arts. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, which conferred upon him its Award in Literature, Award of Merit and its highest award, the Gold Medal. He was the founding playwright of Signature Theatre Company, which has named a theater in his honor in the new Signature Center. Romulus Linney died in 2011 at the age of 80.

From the Director

t is both saddening and heartening that A **Lesson** Before Dying, a story that takes place in 1948, has so much resonance for us, in 2016. But it is a fact that its themes of systemic injustice and the resulting cynical defeatism still warp our 21st century lives. Most heartbreaking of all is Jefferson's internalization of the racist message his own attorney offers, imagining that mercy from whites toward animals is more to be relied upon than mercy toward a young, negro man. Yet, even that can be seen today, again and again in the news surrounding violence towards young black men and women, in which they are so often made to seem the villain - while the outpouring of outrage against big game hunters, for example, never falters, nor does the effort on behalf of homeless pets ever cease.

In the face of these difficult truths it is tempting to dismiss a story like A Lesson Before Dying. We sigh to think of these stories. We've heard them before. Yes, we have heard them before, it's true.

But the most important reason to retell these tales isn't because of the images of hardship they contain. Too many live that reality, every day. It's the images of triumph that must be made to resound: Images of individuals and communities coming together to do what can be done: small steps that lead to huge victories. These truths, these real possibilities, these maps to hope, are

the reasons to tell and retell these stories. It is not because they are stories of struggle. It is because they are stories of overcoming.

A Lesson Before Dying is not a story of struggle. It is a story of facing ones' demons and defeating them. It is a story of overcoming. It is a story of inspiration. It is a story of triumph.

The poet James Weldon Johnson, wrote these words, which are part of what has become known as The Negro National Anthem:

Lift every voice and sing Till earth and heaven ring, Ring with the harmonies of Liberty; Let our rejoicing rise High as the listening skies, Let it resound loud as the rolling sea. Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us. Sing a song full of the hope that the present

has brought us.

Facing the rising sun of our new day begun Let us march on till victory is won.

"Let us march on, till victory is won. Here's To Victory!" Amen.

Andrea J. Dymond

The Cast

In order of appearance

Paul Bonin, Deputy Sheriff - Connor Hess Miss Emma Glenn - Celeste Williams* Grant Wiggins - Trequon Tate* Sam Guidry, Sheriff of Bayonne - David Kortemeier* Jefferson - Jude Carl Vincent* Vivian Baptiste - Carlène Pochette* Reverend Moses Ambrose - A.C. Smith*

Place

Bayonne, Louisiana

Time

1948

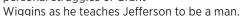
This production has one 15-minute intermission.

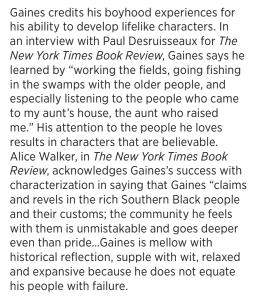


^{*} The actors appear through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

About the Novel, its Creator and the Play

The novel A Lesson Before Dving. published by Knopf in 1993 is set in Louisiana. Considered a success by readers and critics alike, the appeal for most is derived from the intense emotions the story evokes. The author, Ernest J. Gaines. wants the reader to feel compassion for the young black man, Jefferson, whom the jurors convict for a murder he did not commit. Nor can readers ignore the personal struggles of Grant





Gaines's themes reveal universal truths. He demonstrates that racism destroys people; relationships suffer from people's choices; and pride, honor, and manhood can prevail in trying times. While some critics denounce Gaines for his failure to address black's difficulties in today's society, his defense is that he writes for all times and all people.



Ernest J. Gaines

Ernest J. Gaines was born on the River Lake Plantation near the small hamlet of Oscar, in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana. His ancestors had lived on the same plantation since slavery. remaining after emancipation to work the land as sharecroppers. Gaines and his family lived in the houses, much expanded. that had once served as slave quarters. His parents separated when he was eight; the strongest adult influence in his childhood was a great aunt, Augusteen Jefferson, crippled from birth, who crawled from

kitchen to the family's garden patch, growing and preparing food, and caring for him and for six of his brothers and sisters.

Story-telling and oral tradition were a powerful part of African American life in the rural South, and young Ernest Gaines absorbed the stories of his family and neighbors, acquiring a sense of history and an ear for the rhythms of vernacular speech. The only school for African American children in the district was conducted in a single room of the black church. School was open for less than half the year; from the age of nine, Ernest Gaines and the other children were sent to labor alongside their elders in the fields, harvesting vegetables and cotton. Pointe Coupee Parish offered no public high school to its black citizens. For three years, Gaines attended St. Augustine's School, a segregated Catholic school in the parish seat at New Roads, Louisiana.

During World War II, his mother and stepfather, like many African Americans of their generation, left the South to find work in the booming wartime economy. At 15, Gaines joined his mother and stepfather in Vallejo, California, northeast of San Francisco. To keep him off the streets and out of trouble, his stepfather urged him to spend time in the public library. He soon became enthralled

with literature, particularly the 19th century Russian masters, whose tales of a countryside steeped in feudal tradition echoed his own experience of plantation life. Finding no literature that directly portrayed the life of African Americans in the rural South, he began to write stories of his own, recreating the world of his childhood.

After serving in the U.S. Army, he enrolled at San Francisco State University, where he published a number of short stories in the University quarterly. His stories won him admission to the selective graduate program in creative writing at Stanford University, conducted by the novelist Wallace Stegner. Gaines settled in San Francisco after graduate school, working a variety of part-time jobs in the afternoon and reserving his morning hours for writing.

His first novel, Catherine Carmier, was published in 1964. A tragic love story played out against the complex caste system of rural Louisiana, the work met a favorable critical reception, but sold poorly. The next years were difficult ones for Gaines, as a succession of novels and short stories were rejected by publishers. In 1966, he was awarded a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts to continue his writing. The following year, his second novel, *Of Love* and Dust, appeared. Again, he told a story of life and love thwarted by the legacy of servitude and discrimination, but this book attracted greater attention than his first.

While many of his contemporaries were depicting the recent experience of African American migrants to the urban North, Gaines's work was rich in history, the accumulated experience of centuries. A collection of five stories, Bloodline, was published in 1968. In his novels and stories, Gaines created a vividly detailed imaginary community called Bayonne. Although it is clearly modeled on his own Louisiana parish, his Bayonne is full of invented characters and incidents, often shocking, but utterly convincing. Deeply grounded in a distinctive place and culture, his tales resound with universal themes of love and family, of responsibility, injustice and endurance.

In 1971, Gaines was appointed Writer-in-Residence at Denison University in Granville. Ohio. That same year, he completed the work that was to make him famous far beyond his own country. The Autobiography of *Miss Jane* Pittman (1971) is the first-person narrative of a fictional 110-year-old woman, born in slavery. who lives to see the stirrings of the modern Civil Rights Movement. Her story led readers through a century of African American life. A 1974 television adaptation of the novel became a national event. The film won nine Emmy Awards and brought Gaines's work to the attention of a vast audience for the first time.

Not long after the book's publication, Gaines was awarded a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship and swiftly completed a number of major works. In 1993, Gaines received a MacArthur Foundation "genius grant." The same year saw the publication of his most critically acclaimed novel to date. A Lesson Before Dying describes the belated education of a young man wrongly sentenced to death. The book created an international sensation: beyond its achievement as a work of literature, it became a touchstone in the ongoing debate over capital punishment. The work received the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction, and a 1999 television adaptation won the year's Emmy Award as Best Film for Television, Soon thereafter, playwright Romulus Linney was commissioned by the Alabama Shakespeare Festival to write a stage adaptation. The original production opened January 21, 2000 at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. The New York premiere by The Signature Theatre Company opened on September 17, 2000.

Source: Gale Cengage Learning; www.achievement.org



The Big Read aims to encourage reading for pleasure and enrichment by providing citizens with the opportunity to read and discuss a single book within their communities.

We invite you to participate in some of these community engagement events at the CBT and beyond.

FEB. 5 - MAR. 13, 2016

#KnoxBigRead @knoxreads @clarencebrown

POST-PERFORMANCE SALON DISCUSSIONS

Tuesday, March 1 and 8 - Following the 7:30pm performance - Carousel Theatre

Post-performance Salon discussions will be audiencedriven, providing patrons and community members the opportunity to discuss their thoughts, experiences, and issues raised after attending *A Lesson Before Dying*.

CBT'S FAMILY FEAST

Wednesday, March 2, 6pm -UT's Natalie L. Haslam Music Center

In an effort to promote the fading practice of family dinners and to reach out to our underserved community members, the CBT is offering drastically reduced \$10 tickets to a performance of *A Lesson Before Dying* and a pre-performance buffet-style dinner. The only stipulation is that patrons must attend as a family unit, however that may be defined. Limit 6 tickets per family. Recommended for mature middle schoolers and up. Limited availability; first come, first served.

SEASON FOR YOUTH STUDENT MATINEE PERFORMANCES

March 4 and 9 - 9:30am - Carousel Theatre

These specifically designated performances will offer nearly 1,400 middle and high school students the opportunity to attend *A Lesson Before Dying* for only \$6. Additionally, the CBT will provide study guides and promote a follow-up activity.

SUNDAY SYMPOSIUM WITH DR. MICHELLE E. COMMANDER

Sunday, March 13, following the 2pm performance - Carousel Theatre

Following the matinee performance, a discussion led by Dr. Commander will discuss the play and its themes, allowing audience members to further examine its relevance in our society today.

BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Thursday, February 25, 11am

Sequoyah Branch Library, 1140 Southgate Dr.

A light lunch will be served. Facilitated by Ginna Mashburn.

Thursday, February 25, 5pm

Beaumont Elementary*, 1211 Beaumont Ave.

Dinner followed by discussion. Facilitated by Indya Kincannon.

Sunday, February 28, 4pm

Friends of the Library Members Only

Hosted at the home of Claire Serrell. Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served. RSVP: 215-8775. Become a Friend by visiting knoxfriends.org.

Thursday, March 3, 1pm

Halls Branch Library, 4518 E. Emory Rd.

Hosted by the Halls Book Club. Facilitated by Mary Pom Claiborne.

Monday, March 7, 6pm

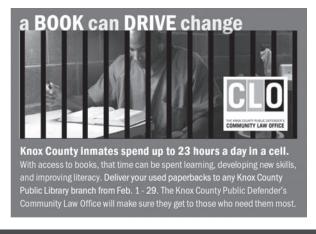
Cedar Bluff. 9045 Cross Park Dr.

A light dinner will be served. Facilitated by Ginny Weatherstone.



Partnership

* A Great Schools Partnership Community School



The CBT is also a book drop-off location!

THANKS FOR MAKING THE BIG READ POSSIBLE

PROGRAM HOSTS:







CLARENCE BROWN THEATRE



The Big Read is a program of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with Arts Midwest.

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Vice Chancellor's Office for Diversity & Inclusion Youth Leadership Knoxville

YWC.A

The Actors



CONNOR HESS

(Paul Bonin, *Deputy Sheriff*) is a Knoxville native and a Junior undergrad here at UT. He is thrilled to be returning to the CBT and making his Carousel Theatre debut. You may have recently seen

him as "Young Ebenezer" in A Christmas Carol (2015). His other UT Theatre credits include: "Peter Cratchit", A Christmas Carol (2014), "Peter Cratchit"/"Dick Wilkins", A Christmas Carol (2009), and "Him", Homebound: A Play for Nobody with All Campus Theatre. TV/Film Credits: "Young Mike", Snapped: Killer Couples with Jupiter Entertainment, and "Alex", The Lion with MissionWorx Films. Connor would like to thank his parents for their enthusiasm and support of his art. He would like to thank the amazing cast and crew for helping make this such an amazing experience. Connor is pursuing a degree in Theatre and Psychology. (Jeremiah 29:11)



DAVID KORTEMEIER

(Sam Guidry, Sheriff) CBT credits include: "Ebenezer Scrooge" in *A Christmas* Carol (5 seasons), "Clown 2" in *The 39 Steps*, "Nick Bottom" in A Midsummer Night's Dream. "King Arthur"

in Monty Python's Spamalot, "Lloyd Dallas" in Noises Off, "Harold Hill" in The Music Man, "Cervantes"/"Don Quixote" in Man of La Mancha and "Don Homenides de Histangua" in A Flea in Her Ear. Other regional work includes principal roles at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, the Great Lakes Theatre Festival in Cleveland, Drury Lane Theatre and Fox Valley Repertory in Chicago, thirteen seasons with the Illinois Shakespeare Festival in Bloomington, IL., and three seasons with the Indiana Festival Theatre in Bloomington, IN. David holds the MFA in Acting from the University of Louisville and is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association and SAG-AFTRA.



CARLÈNE POCHETTE

(Vivian Baptiste) Carlène Pochette, originally from the French Saint Martin island in the West Indies, is excited to return to the stage in her debut appearance at the Carousel Theatre. She was

recently seen in A Christmas Carol ('15) as "Mrs. Dilber" at the Clarence Brown Theatre. Prior to beginning her first year as an MFA Acting candidate at UT, she has performed in many independent film and theatre productions in Philadelphia, including Ruined, Under the Cherry Tree, The Piano Lesson, The Last Days of Judas Iscariot, and By the Way, Meet Vera Stark. Carlène graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a BA in Social Science. She has had a few producing credits that include music video projects, and a documentary about rebuilding Haiti and its educational system. Peace and blessings to all the "Jefferson's" around the world.



A.C. SMITH

(Reverend Moses Ambrose) A.C. last appeared at the Clarence Brown Theatre in the production of Fences a while back. He is overjoyed to return here to work on vet another wonderful

production. Smith is a native of Chicago where he does the bulk of his work. He has performed at nearly all of the major theatres there. Smith's home theatre is The Court Theatre where he has worked for the past eight years or so in productions ranging from *Moliere* to the great August Wilson and a host of other great classic works. In addition to that, Smith received The Joseph Jefferson Award for his portrayal of "Trov Maxson" in their production of Fences. When not in Chicago, A.C. can often be found performing at The St. Louis Black Repertory Co. where he has been a member for over twentyone years, and he is a nine times Woodie King Jr. Award winner. He has also performed at many regional theatres across the country, including Portland Stage Theatre, Actors

The Actors

Theatre of Louisville, Milwaukee Rep., Kansas City Rep., Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Geva Theatre and the Peninsula Players in Wisconsin to name a few. A.C. understudied and performed the role of "Boy Willie" in the Broadway National Tour of *The Piano Lesson* directed by Lloyd Richards. He also portrayed the title role in The New Federal Theatres production of Jelly Belly (Off Broadway) in which he received an Audelco Award nomination. Smith has done many independent films and a few feature films, in addition to that, he has done radio, T.V., voice overs, commercials and print work for Ebony and Jet magazines, PEACE.



TREQUON TATE

(Grant Wiggins) is both honored and thrilled to make his CBT debut. A native of Starkville, Mississippi, he currently resides in Chicago. Treguon holds a BFA from the

University of Southern Mississippi. He is a proud alumni of the Emerging Professional Acting Residency program at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater. His regional credits include: Smokev Joe's Cafe. Les Misérables. To Kill A Mockingbird (Hope Summer Repertory Theatre), Sucker Punch (Victory Gardens Theater). *Police Brutality* (American Blues Theater, Ripped Fest.) MTH: A Night on New Orleans and The BFG (Emerald City Theatre/Broadway Playhouse), Smokey Joe's Cafe (Fireside Theatre), Duke Ellington's Queenie Pie (Chicago Opera Theatre). Dreamgirls and Golden Boy (Porchlight Music Theatre). Once Upon A People: A Dancesical (Black Ensemble Theater), A Raisin in the Sun, A Christmas Carol, Assassins, and Double Take (Milwaukee Repertory Theater). He is very grateful to tell such a powerful and relevant story and thanks CBT for this amazing opportunity. Treguon would also like to thank his family for their unwavering love and support. He is a proud member of the American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA).



JUDE CARL VINCENT

(Jefferson) Jude Carl Vincent, native of Brooklyn, New York is a first year MFA Acting candidate at the University of Tennessee. He attended Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta,

Georgia where he received a BA in Public Relations Management. He has performed in the Clarence Brown Theatre's production of A Christmas Carol '15 ("Dick Wilkins", "Christmas Future"). Prior to relocating to Tennessee, his performances included: Outcry ("Emmett Till"), Rev. Joseph E. Lowery's 92nd Birthday Celebration In The Board Room, Detroit Blues (BLIND Thomas Franks), the New York State Forensic Champion in Varsity Oral Interpretation, and has done a National Voiceover Commercial for Pepsi Maxx. He is a proud member of the Actors' Equity Association.



CELESTE WILLIAMS

(Miss Emma Glenn) Celeste Williams is making her first appearance at Clarence Brown Theatre. A Chicago-based actor, her representative theatre work includes productions

at Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Court Theatre, Victory Gardens Theatre, Next Theatre, Writers' Theatre, Northlight Theatre and Milwaukee Repertory Theatre where she was a member of the acting company. Her recent television work includes Boss (Starz) and Empire (Fox). Ms. Williams is a member of the Columbia College Chicago theatre faculty and a 30-year, proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

The Artists

ANDREA J. DYMOND

(Director) is thrilled to be working in the Carousel Theatre at Clarence Brown again, where she previously directed Lynn Nottage's, Intimate Apparel. A Chicagobased freelance director, specializing in new work, Andrea was formerly Resident Director at Victory Gardens Theater. She directed 11 productions there, including 7 world premieres. Chicago credits include: Tree, Year Zero, Blue Door, Free Man of Color, Shoes, and I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document... (Victory Gardens); Helen (Next); and Keep A Song In Your Soul, which she directed and developed with the Grammy Award-winning Carolina Chocolate Drops (Old Town School of Folk Music). Other regional credits include: the new musical, *St. Heaven* (Village Theatre) and Having Our Say (Madison Repertory). Recent credits include: Shepsu Aahku's Softly Blue (MPAACT) and Lynn Nottage's Mud River Stone (Eclipse). In addition, Andrea's experience includes research and production dramaturgy, directing at new works festivals nationally; serving as thesis play advisor for MFA playwrights at Carnegie Mellon; and, directing at NNPN's MFA Playwrights Workshops at the Kennedy Center. Andrea teaches directing, collaboration, text analysis, acting and new play development at Columbia College Chicago, where she recently directed a production of Blues for an Alabama Sky by Pearl Cleage and Euripides's Hecuba in the traditional style, with masks. and a singing and dancing Chorus.

HENRY WILKINSON

(Scenic Designer) Henry Wilkinson is proud to continue his graduate school career with A Lesson Before Dying. He is a second year MFA Scenic Design candidate that designed "Master Harold"...and the Boys last season, a design that both informed and distantly echoes this one. With a degree in architecture from Clemson University and a passion for philosophy and the power for storytelling, Henry came to the theatre fairly recently as a space to unify these interests within the field of scenic design. A Lesson Before Dying

has been a privilege to realize both for its mythically beautiful qualities that touch upon the grave and constant in human suffering and because of its tragically poignant resonance with the crises facing today's America.

OLIVIA TREES

(Costume Designer) Olivia is a second year MFA Costume Design candidate at the University of Tennessee. She holds a BA in Theatre from Florida State University. Last season, she designed A Shayna Maidel for the Clarence Brown Lab Theatre, for which she won first place at the SETC Design Competition. She has worked previously for the Weston Playhouse, Euroco Costumes, and The Lost Colony. She is incredibly grateful to have worked with such a talented group of artists on this production of A Lesson Before Dying.

MARANDA DeBUSK

(Lighting Designer) is a second year MFA Lighting Design candidate at UT, Knoxville pursuing a degree in Lighting Design and Digital Media. Recent work at the CBT includes: lighting design for Mr. Burns: A Post Electric Play; assistant lighting design for The 39 Steps, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and A Christmas Carol; and associate projections design for Hank Williams: Lost Highway. Other credits include: lighting design for Harvest (Phoenix World Theatre; Kochi, India), Boeing, Boeing (Warehouse Theatre; Greenville, SC), Parallel Lives (North Carolina Stage Company; Asheville, NC), and *The Tempest* (Pellissippi State Community College; Knoxville, TN); projection design for Higher Ground: Find a Way (Higher Ground; Cumberland, KY); and the assistant lighting design for Peter and the Starcatcher (St. Louis Rep), Unity 1918 (Project: Theatre; New York, NY), and Evita (Serenbe Playhouse; Atlanta, GA).

The Artists

MIKE PONDER

(Sound Designer) Mike has been a Sound Designer and Engineer for UT's Theatre program and the CBT professional company for over seventeen years where he's worked with national and international directors including Liviu Ciulei, Paul Barnes, Henryk Baranowski, Frank Heinig, and Gerald Freedman, Some standout productions include Dance in Time (the American debut of Laszlo Marton's epic told through movement), Metamorphoses (with Joe Haj), and the American debut of George Tabori's The Brecht Files. More recently. Mike enjoyed making very odd music for Casey Sam's production of Dead Man's Cell Phone.

ROSS JACKSON

(Stage Manager) is very excited to join the Clarence Brown Theatre (CBT) in tackling this important work. Ross' recent credits include: *The Lady Onstage*, *Orlando*, and *True* West (Profile Theater), The International and UCI's Coast-to-Coast Showcase (Playwright's Horizons), A Midsummer Night's Dream (New Swan Shakespeare Festival), and several productions with the University of California. Irvine from which he holds his Master of Fine Arts degree in Stage Management. Ross is also the Creator/Producer of *Our* Life: The Black Youth Stories Project, an initiative aimed to create conversation about anti-blackness in America. He would like to thank his family for their support and CBT for welcoming him with open arms. Ross is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

CALVIN MacLEAN

(Producing Artistic Director) Cal is in his tenth year as Theatre Department Head and CBT Company Producing Artistic Director. CBT productions he has directed include: A Flea in Her Ear, The Life of Galileo, The Secret Rapture, A Streetcar Named Desire (with Dale Dickey), Amadeus (with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra), Kiss Me, Kate, Sweeney *Todd* (with the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra and Dale Dickey), Our Country's Good and last season's *The Threepenny Opera*. On the

faculty at Illinois State University for 16 years, Cal was also the Artistic Director of the Illinois Shakespeare Festival. Professionally active in Chicago, his productions - mostly at the Famous Door Theatre - earned several Joseph Jefferson Awards for Outstanding Production and Direction. Most notable was Joshua Sobol's *Ghetto*, a production that ran for seven months and honored with four Jeff Awards including for Outstanding Direction of a Play. Cal is the Past President of the University/ Resident Theatre Association and a member of the National Theatre Conference. He and his wife Rebecca are the proud parents of Sam and Rachael.

DAVID BRYANT BYRD

(Managing Director) Prior to joining the Clarence Brown Theatre in 2013, David held management positions at Westport Country Playhouse, American Dance Festival at Duke University, Triad Stage (General Manager), Yale Repertory Theater (Associate Managing Director), the Dwight/Edgewood Project (Managing Director), and the Guthrie Theater. He also assisted the producing team at Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS in New York, NY. David received an MFA degree in Theater Management from Yale School of Drama and a BA degree in Drama from UNC-Greensboro in his native North Carolina. Appointed to the Chancellor's Commission for LGBT People and the College of Arts & Sciences' Diversity Committee, David also serves on the McClung Museum Academic Programs Advisory Board, the UT Knoxville Diversity Metrics Task Force and has been a grant panelist for the Tennessee Arts Commission and United Way of Greater Knoxville. David has adjudicated numerous theatre productions for young artists and has made community engagement in the arts and diversity and inclusion among his greatest goals. He is a 2015 graduate of Introduction Knoxville and a 2016 Knoxville Business Journal 40 Under Forty Honoree.

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LEAGUE OF RESIDENT THEATRES

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is one of just 12 universities nationwide with its own professional LORT theatre. The Clarence Brown Theatre Company is a LORT D company and is fully integrated into the Department of Theatre's academic curriculum. Four of the six mainstage productions are produced on the LORT contract, allowing students the opportunity to work with seasoned professionals.

Founded in 1974 with Sir Anthony Quayle as Artistic Director, the Clarence Brown Theatre Company is one of the older companies in the LORT system. It has a distinguished history of hosting artists of national stature including Mary Martin, John Cullum, Zoe Caldwell, Carol Mayo Jenkins, David Keith, Dale Dickey, and Teresa Williams among others.

All Department of Theatre faculty have dual appointments with the professional company in their area of expertise. MFA Performance students may join the Clarence Brown Theatre Company in their third year of study. MFA Design students have the opportunity to work on LORT productions throughout their graduate training.

COMPANY MEMBERS

Producing Artistic Director: Calvin MacLean **Managing Director:** David Bryant Byrd

Terry Silver-Alford David Brian Alley Bill Black Kate Buckley Marianne Custer Jed Diamond Carol Mavo Jenkins Abigail Langham Joe Payne Christopher Pickart Mike Ponder Casey Sams John Sipes Terry Weber Kenton Yeager Katy Wolfe

PLAY A PART And join the movement





Join us in preserving buildings and places that are the historic heart of East Tennessee! A Knox Heritage membership keeps you informed about important community preservation issues, events and resources and connects you to an expansive community of like-minded enthusiasts and professionals. Membership benefits include advanced access to Summer Supper tickets, discounts at The Knox Heritage Salvage Shop and our Preservation Partner businesses. Plus, you'll be our guest for our popular Members Only Tours twice each year. Membership supports preservation education and advocacy in 16 East Tennessee counties, the preservation of Historic Westwood and the restoration of endangered historic places. Join us today and play an important part in securing the future of the past.









MANAGEMENT

Assistant Director Isaac Krispin

Assistant Stage Managers

Delaynie Rizer Kara Eble Trusty

COSTUMES

Wardrobe Supervisor **Kyle Schellinger**

Assistant Wardrobe Supervisor

Emory Humphrey

Wardrobe Run Crew

Meg Sutherland

SCENERY

Deck Crew

Bailee Boisclair Kacie Long

Nacie Long

LIGHTING

Production Electrician/ Light Board Operator Jared Sanchez

SOUND

Sound Board Operator **Maia Wrestler**

Merrill Lynch is proud to support The Clarence Brown Theatre

Sheena M McCall

Vice President Wealth Management Advisor 865.521.8847

Merrill Lynch

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LEADERSHIP

Producing Artistic Director - Cal MacLean Managing Director - David Bryant Byrd

ADMINISTRATION

Marketing & Communications Director -

Robin Conklin

Business Manager - Sharon Ward

General Management Associate -

Shelly Payne

Administrative Specialist -

Charlotte Holland

Accounting Specialist - Jill Baker

External Relations Associate -

Amanda Middleton

Grants & Research Associate -

Hana Sherman

Graphic Designer -

Julie Anna Summers

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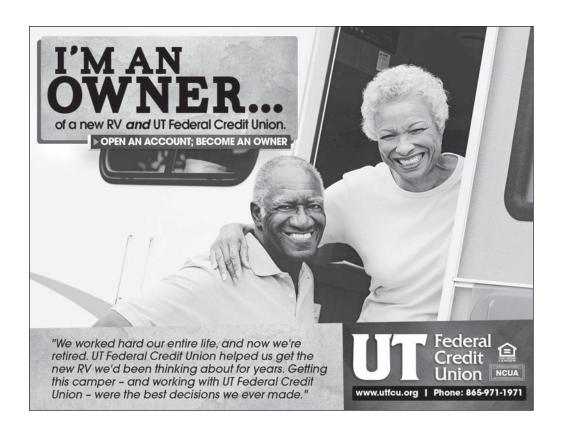
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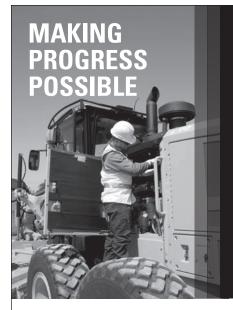
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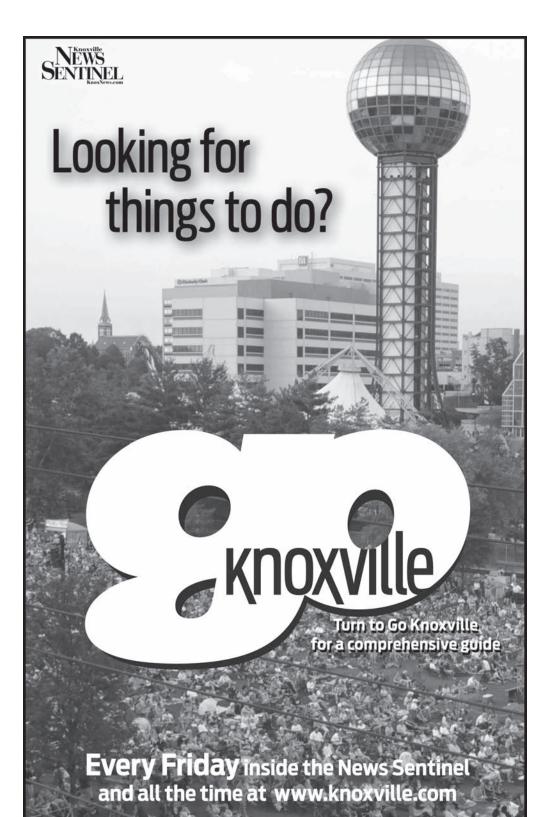
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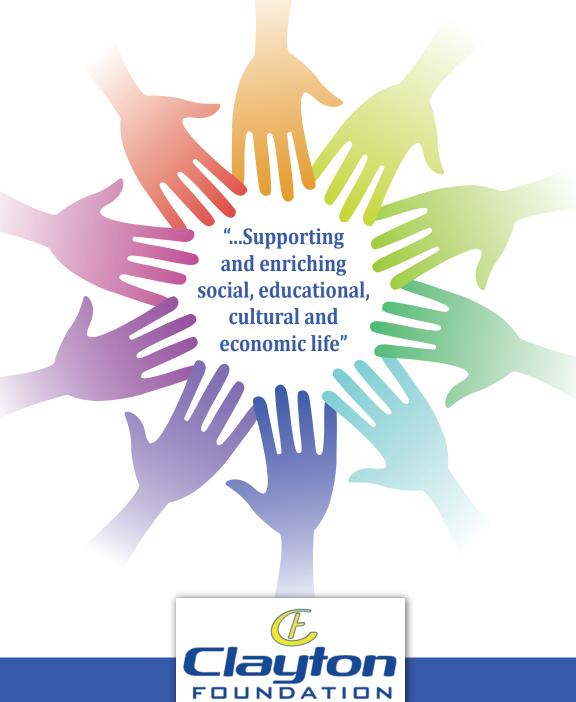
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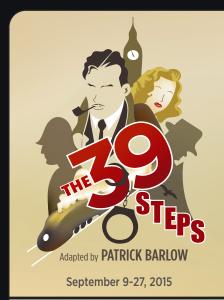




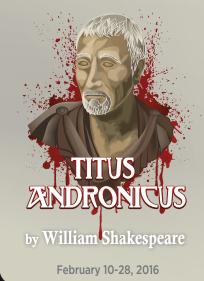


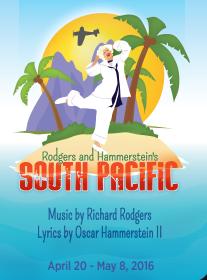
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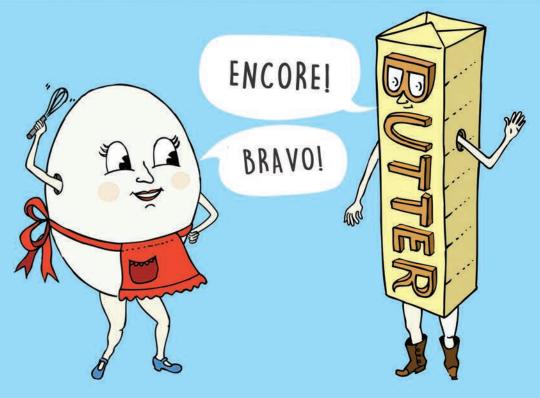


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Did you know?

The Carousel Theatre

by Jack Neely

The Carousel may be more comfortable today than it was in the 1950s, but its weatherproofed exterior, added in recent years, conceals an extraordinary building. Unusual even when it was built, the Carousel Theatre may now be the oldest theater-in-the-round in America.

At the time, this spot was not part of UT's campus, but a residential neighborhood. In 1951, the Carousel was described as existing in a "grove" off South Seventeenth Street, between Yale and Rose Avenues.

Leading the effort was Minnesota-born, Cornell-

educated
Professor
Paul Soper.
The English
scholar had
been directing
volunteer
drama groups
since 1938.
Before the
Carousel,
faculty,
student, and
community



productions were nomadic. A few were staged at Alumni Hall, though it was too large for most productions, or rooms at Ayres Hall or the Tyson House, which were too small. Sometimes, when it was available, college thespians used the old Bijou Theatre downtown. In the 1940s, many UT productions took place at Tyson Junior High, on Kingston Pike. By 1950, performing drama clubs had been putting on shows around UT for 40 years, but they'd never had a home. The Carousel was Knoxville's first theater built expressly for locally produced drama.

In those pragmatic days, UT was growing rapidly, partly thanks to the GI Bill, but had no theater department and no funding for drama. The Carousel began as a community project. Among its early sponsors was the local Junior League and the fading Tennessee Valley Players, the troupe that flourished in the 1930s, when it helped launch teenaged actress Patricia Neal's career. Others in the community who

helped fund the Carousel were George Dempster—former Knoxville city manager and inventor of the trademarked Dumpster—and football coach Robert Neyland, who contributed some used construction materials for the project. The university was able to help with a no-interest loan to complete the project.

Soper and the effort's other leaders chose an extraordinarily unusual design. Architect Frederick Roth, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology alumnus, happened to be in Knoxville working for the Tennessee Valley Authority. Roth would later be known for his work in Philadelphia, and still later as a prominent member of the faculty at Clemson. He chose an unusual design: a theater-in-the round venue, but one that was almost infinitely adaptable,

with moveable seating and removable walls. Without walls, the octagonal building resembled a merry-goround, suggesting the name: Carousel.

Its founding date might puzzle historians. It was formally completed in 1952, but the Carousel hosted several plays.

with audiences, in 1951, when the roof was a canvas skirt and the flooring was sawdust. Among the first plays performed there, in the summer of 1951, were the Moss Hart comedy, *Light Up the Sky*, and the Emlyn Williams thriller, *Night Must Fall*. Early performances were in the summertime, with open walls, allowing audience members to see stars and fireflies as they watched.

The architectural oddity got attention. In 1952, the Nashville Tennessean Magazine ran a photographic spread about the Carousel, praising Roth for its design, "a happy blend of Chautauqua-arena openness and sound theatrical engineering."

Although UT students and professors were involved in it from the earliest days, many of the Carousel's early actors had no connection to UT. Some of its most important supporters, including Dempster, had never attended college. Some were accomplished thespians, like Barbara Gentry, a Knoxville socialite who'd enjoyed a brief Hollywood and Broadway

career. Others were just Knoxville professionals, like affable Al Heins, who ran a building-supply business. Among its early actors were Nancy Tanner, the elegant ornithologist—among the last ever to witness an ivory-billed woodpecker—and energetic

Kermit Ewing, who later founded UT's art department.

In its early seasons, the Carousel sometimes hosted as many as a dozen separate productions a year, mostly popular plays of recent years. Outliers included R.U.R., the Czech science-fiction play, in 1955, and Gore Vidal's Visit to a Small Planet, in 1958. (Very new at the time, it would only later be interpreted as a Jerry Lewis comedy.)

In the 1950s, the Carousel witnessed the beginnings of several notable careers, including those of future Tony winner John Cullum, whose first Carousel performance was in a production of The Philadelphia Story in 1952 (he was the reporter). Cullum appeared in several more Carousel productions before his 1960 Broadway debut in Camelot. Collin Wilcox costarred with Cullum in a 1953 production of J.B. Priestly's Dangerous Corner. Wilcox

(1935-2009) later appeared on Broadway and in several iconic TV shows like The Twilight Zone, but will always be remembered for the difficult role of the disturbed accuser in the 1963 classic movie To Kill a Mockingbird. Appearing in more than a dozen Carousel productions. Wilcox was one of the Carousel's busiest actors in its early years.

Even future novelist David Madden performed at the Carousel, once in a 1956 production of *The Petrified* Forest alongside the teenager Carol Mayo Jenkins and John Cullum. Madden also appeared in what was probably the Carousel's first Shakespearean production. The Taming of the Shrew. in 1957. In March, 1955, the Carousel premiered the UT student's one-act play, Cassandra Singing, Madden later expanded it into one of his best-known novels.

By the 1960s, the Carousel was familiar to area schoolchildren on field trips, as long yellow buses lined up around the building for daytime performances of Cinderella or Rumpelstiltskin. It's safe to say that tens of thousands of East Tennessee children saw their first plays at the Carousel-and, perhaps, got too accustomed to the idea that actors often burst into the play from behind the audience.

The campus of the rapidly growing university

grew up around the Carousel. In the 1960s, its stretch of South Seventeenth Street vanished altogether, as the Carousel became part of the backvard of modernist McClung Plaza. In 1970, the Carousel was dwarfed by the Clarence Brown Theatre, but still played a role in UT theater, better suited to intimate productions.

In April, 1976, modern playwright Edward Albee made a guest appearance at the Carousel, leading students in two discussion sessions. Later, author Alex Halev. whose main connection to drama was writing the story for most popular miniseries in television history, Roots, came to the Carousel to read an unpublished memoir about his childhood.

Late in the century, its formal name became the Ula Love Doughty Carousel Theatre, to honor an uncommon philanthropist. Ula Love attended UT briefly in the early 1920s. She enjoyed a showbusiness career as a pretty dancing

girl in Ziegfeld's Follies and she appeared in several Hollywood movies of the 1930s, mostly in comic roles, sometimes sharing a stage with Shirley Temple, Gene Autry, or Laurel & Hardy. In her later years, she was especially fond of the Carousel, and the former starlet supported it as a patron.

The Carousel was central to an unprecedented cultural exchange in the late 1990s, when it hosted several cutting-edge European directors interpreting experimental themes.

Meanwhile, the Carousel has maintained a bit of its early community-theater cred. Well-traveled local troupe Carpetbag Theatre's Between a Ballad and the Blues, an African-American musical narrative that subsequently toured around the country, debuted at the Carousel in early 2008.

Today, the Carousel is the oldest building in a part of campus known for major modernist structures of brick and concrete. And it may be America's oldest intact theater in the round.



Carol Mayo Jenkins and John Cullum in The Petrified Forest, 1956

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WHAT

The Clarence Brown Theatre Acting Workshop is designed to give young actors training in several different skills; basic acting technique, voice, movement and improvisation and musical theatre. While many will have had introductions to these skills and approaches to the craft of acting, our aim is to give workshop participants intensive exposure to tools they will need to pursue as they develop as actors.

WHO

The workshop is for 9th through 12th graders and rising college freshmen. Prior performance experience is not required.

Twenty participants will be accepted in each session on a first come, first served basis.

WHERE

Classes will be held at the Ula Love Doughty Carousel Theatre which is the theatre space directly adjacent to the Clarence Brown Theatre. Built on the UT campus in the 1950s, the Carousel Theatre has one of the few true arena stages in the United States. Students will have the unique opportunity of learning to work in theatre-in-the-round.

WHEN

SESSION I - June 20 - July 1, 2016 (M-F) 9am until 4pm; no classes on the weekend

SESSION II - July 18 - 29, 2016 (M-F) 9am until 4pm; no classes on the weekend

BRING/WEAR

A bag lunch with drinks and snacks for breaks during the day. A notebook and pen or pencil. There will be some homework: research on specific plays, learning lines for scenes, etc.

Please plan to wear comfortable clothes and shoes in which you can move easily. Nothing fancy or expensive!

Fees/Parking

Each session is \$525. Parking is available in the parking lot behind the Theatre (Staff Lot #23) with the purchase of a two week \$30 parking permit.



To download an application form:

clarencebrowntheatre.com/workshop

Application forms can be faxed to: (865) 974-4867

For more information, please contact **Terry Silver-Alford** (865) 974-8504 or tsilvera@utk.edu

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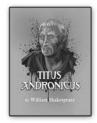


















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Deaf Night at the

Theatre This season we will offer two Deaf Nights at the Theatre:

- A Christmas Carol Tues., Dec. 8, 2015
- South Pacific Tues., Apr. 26, 2016

These special events are produced through a partnership with UT's Center on Deafness and are designed to be fully accessible for members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. More than a dozen interpreters are stationed throughout the facility and two teams interpreting the production. Patrons ordering single tickets who need interpreted section seating should contact the Box Office (865) 974.5161 or email housemanager@utk.edu. (not available online)



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We are proud to welcome military personnel, spouses, children and veterans to our theatre. Discounted tickets are available to activeduty military and immediate families, as well as veterans for our Mainstage and Carousel Theatre productions. Contact the Box Office at (865) 974.5161 for tickets and identify yourself as a Blue Star Theatre participant. Visit clarencebrowntheatre.com/blue-star-theatre to learn more. This offer is based on availability and cannot be combined with other offers.



Each year, several CBT productions include Season for Youth performances scheduled during the regular school-day. Available at drastically reduced rates for school groups, these performances engage and expose youth to the wonder of live theatre and help inspire and build the next generation of theatre goers! Visit clarencebrowntheatre.com/SFY to learn more.



For more than a decade, our Summer Acting Workshops have offered high school students intensive training in acting technique, voice, movement, improvisation, and musical theatre. The popular program now offers two weeks of training in each of our two summer sessions. Visit our website to learn more clarencebrowntheatre.com/acting-workshops.





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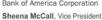




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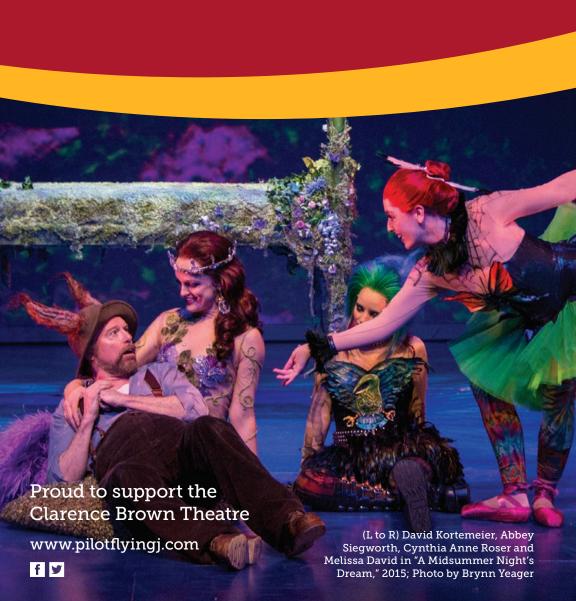




UT is home to the longest-running legal clinical program in the nation. Since 1947, the College of Law's legal clinics have provided students with opportunities to learn by doing, representing clients in need and helping resolve legal disputes under faculty supervision. Today, the UT Legal Clinic ranks eighth among public universities and sixteenth among all US law schools in U.S. News and World Report's list of legal clinical programs. To learn more, visit law.utk.edu/clinics.

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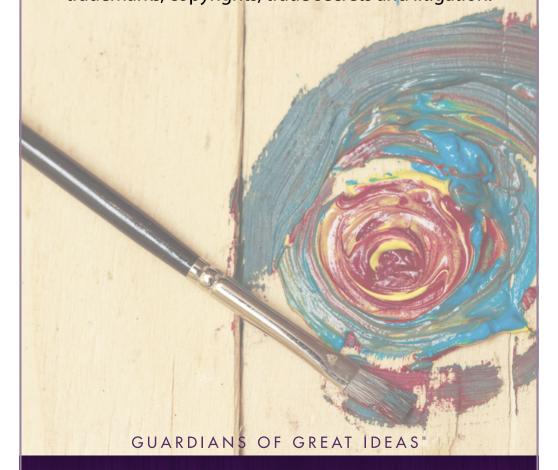


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