



**Birmingham  
Festival  
Theatre**

presents

The Tale  
of the  
Allergist's Wife

by **Charles Busch**

directed by  
Ellise Mayor

Performances are 8:00 p.m.  
Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays  
March 20 - April 5, 2008

Sunday matinee is March 30 at 2:30 p.m.

for reservations, call **933-2383**  
or go online at **www. BFTonline.org**

Founded in 1972, Birmingham Festival Theatre is the city's oldest theatre producing contemporary and classic fare for adults. It is managed by an all-volunteer, working board of directors. BFT has staged more than 200 productions — involving more than 50 directors, 1000 actors, and 500 crew people — attended by almost 10,000 audience members.

# **We Gratefully Acknowledge**

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all the wonderful actors and volunteers who, over the years, have donated time and talent to create this magical place called BFT!

## **2007-2008 BFT Board of Directors**

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# The Tale of the Allergist's Wife

written by Charles Busch

directed by Ellise Mayor

featuring

Marjorie - Debbie Smith

Mohammed - Mackey Atkinson

Ira - Michael Abrams

Frieda - Adriana Keathley

Lee - Jan D. Hunter

**Fall 2000, Upper West Side, New York City**

**there will be one 12 minute intermission**

**Set Design** - Mandy Thomas

**Lighting Design** - Mandy Thomas

**Sound Design** - Marc LeMay

**Set Construction** - Mandy Thomas, Sarah Schiesz,  
Jordan Crenshaw, Galen Boehme,  
Matt Adams, Trevor Gourley,  
Sufia Butt, Mackenzie Smith

**Set Decoration** - Beth Bradley

**Stage Manager** - Sufia Butt

**Assistant Stage Manager** - Trevor Gourley

**Light Operator** - Trevor Gourley

**Production Coordinator** - Carl Sosnin, John Falkenberry

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

Originally produced by Manhattan Theatre Club on February 8, 2000. Subsequently produced on Broadway by Manhattan Theatre Club, Lynne Meadows, Artistic Director, Barry Grove, Executive Producer, Carol Shorestein Hays, Daryl Roth, Stuart Thompson, and Douglas S. Cramer, opening on November 2, 000.

## PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

**Ellise Mayor (director)** last directed *The Oldest Profession* for BFT in the fall of 2007. She is the Artistic Director for The Seasoned Performers, a senior adult theatre company beginning its 25<sup>th</sup> season of touring. She hopes you enjoy sharing your evening with these wonderful artists as much as she has.

**Michael Abrams (Ira)** started acting professionally in 1973 in Los Angeles. During the years before leaving L.A. for Birmingham in 2004, he appeared in over 50 stage productions, 200 radio dramas and various TV shows and motion pictures. Favorite roles include Marco The Magnificent in *Carnival*, Julian in *The Public Eye*, Herr Schultz in *Cabaret*, *Gorey Stories* (based on Edward Gorey's work with Tony Tanner) and several world premiers staged at West Coast Ensemble in Hollywood, CA of which he was a member for 13 years. After arriving in Birmingham he was pulled out of semi-retirement to play the part of J.B. Biggley in Magic City's production of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* at the Virginia Samford Theatre in 2006. He has performed in improvisational comedy, coached acting as well as improvisational comedy and has directed three world premier plays. He was once referred to in the Los Angeles Times as "Marvelous Michael Abrams", praise that with \$1.25 was able to get him a cup of coffee at a local donut shop.

### A Note From the Director

Laughs aside, this show speaks to me about the redemptive power of art and the most important lesson there is --- to thine own self be true.

## McNolia's

CARDS & GIFTS



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**Mackey Atkinson (Mohammed)** is thrilled to be back on the BFT stage after being a part of *Elegies for Angels*, *Punks*, and *Raging Queens*. He has performed in over 40 shows in the Birmingham area. He has also been studying ballet for over 16 years. He thanks Ellise for this wonderful opportunity. He dedicates the show to his family.

**Jan D. Hunter (Lee)** first performed at BFT with Ellise Mayor in *Angry Housewives*. Jan's not angry or a wife anymore, but is happy to be here with Ellise again, along with this terrific cast. As she's empty nested, she's performed in one play after another since she took her baby to college in August...The Virginia Samford Theater 80th Anniversary Gala, Magic City Actor's Theater's *Bye Bye Birdie*, Center

## PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

Stage's *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, VST's *Wit's Other End* and "*I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. She hosts the popular Act 3 at the VST, is one half of The Hot Tamales with buddy Kristi and a quarter of Four For Time with Kristi, Lonnie, and Carl. She recently received an individual artist award from the Cultural Alliance and will attend a cabaret conference at Yale University in July. Other productions at BFT include *Closer Than Ever*, *Putting It Together*, *Hello Again* and *The Fourth Wall*. Thanks for supporting the arts in Birmingham!

**Adriana Keathley (Frieda)** was born and raised in Miami, where she received her dance training. She was lead dancer with the Miami Ballet before moving to New York. She danced with the Metropolitan Opera Ballet and danced and acted on Broadway in *Camelot* and *Ballroom*. She acted in Regional Theatre in *Ballroom*, *Pack of Lies*, *A Perfect Ganesh*, and *The Desert Song*. On Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway she did *Uneasy Lies* and *The House of Bernada Alba* at the Round-About Theatre. Television includes Day player on *One Life to Live* and under five on *All My Children* and *As the World Turns*. She is a member of the Seasoned Performers. She is so thrilled and honored to be once again performing at the BFT. She did *The Oldest Profession* at Birmingham Festival Theatre, directed by Ellise Mayor and is thrilled to be working with her again in front of the lights. She did *Thelma* in *'night, Mother* with Ellise as Jessie at the Theatre Downtown. Since moving to Birmingham she has been teaching ballet at the Pointe Dance Arts and Birmingham Ballet Academy and has performed with them in *The Nutcracker* and *Hansel & Gretel*. My thanks to my husband, the poet and playwright Andrew Glaze, for putting up with my crazy schedules and for all the support he gives me. I love you, Andy.

**Debbie Smith (Marjorie)** started acting in Pittsburgh's summer stock theatre in 1968 (ouch!). Since moving to The Ham, she has been in several productions at BFT, including *The Oldest Profession*, *Fuddy Meers* and *Elegies for Angels, Punks and Raging Queens*. She has also worked at Theatre Downtown, in *Pillowman* and *Ten Little Indians*. She is proud of her former membership in the now-defunct-but-lovingly-remembered improv comedy troupe *torrential downplay*. Her two favorite productions are her daughter Madeline and son Charlie, who are quite possibly the most amazing people on the planet.

**Mandy Thomas (Scenic and Lighting Design)** began designing over twenty years ago at Gardner-Webb University where she received her B.A. in English and Theatre. Her design



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## PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

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We're always pleased to have good volunteers. Introduce yourself and let us get you involved.



credits include *The Glass Menagerie*, *Spoon River Anthology*, *Nightwatch*, *Into the Woods*, *Agnes of God*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Still Life with Iris*, *Ramona Quimby*, and numerous dance productions in the Birmingham area, as well as award-winning designs for *Mame* and *The Heiress* at the Vero Beach Theatre Guild. She recently was honored to design the scenery and lighting for BFT's smash hit *I Am My Own Wife*, and is pleased to be working with BFT again. Mandy is currently in her fifth year as Assistant Technical Director/Scene Shop Supervisor with Birmingham-Southern College Theatre and is blessed with a multitude of hard-working and talented students. You can see her next creation right here at BFT with *The White Rose*, playing in May.

**Sufia Cassandra Butt (Stage Manager)** is a first-year Theatre Major, with a focus in technical theatre, at Birmingham-Southern College.

She is a graduate from Shades Valley High School where for two years she was privileged to have as her mentor Roy Hudson. She has worked as a stage manager, scenic artist, and student technical director, among other technical jobs. She is very happy to be working with such a wonderful cast and crew.

**Beth Bradley (art on the set and in the lobby)** is a local artist who has been offering acrylic painting classes to adults in a cozy, wine-and-music-filled environment since "before it became trendy." Beth had a lot of fun decorating the set for this wonderful play with her own pieces, as well as work by her students. Most of these original pieces are for sale! Contact Beth for more info at [alabeth@aol.com](mailto:alabeth@aol.com), or call 205.901.4620.

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The curators of the Doncaster Collection  
The guiding light of Jane Thompson

# A BFT EXTRA!

Vivian Levy plans on having a quiet evening at home with her daughter. Her carefully controlled suburban world rapidly descends into chaos with the arrival of one IRS agent, two ex-husbands, and three bumbling terrorists intent on blowing something up. Join BFT for a reading of the new comedy, *Terrorist in the Family Room*, an exploration of the terror we all wreak on each other in the time of the "War on Terror".



A staged reading of Birmingham resident Andrew Duxbury's *Terrorist in the Family Room* is scheduled for **Sunday, March 30, at 5:30 pm** at Birmingham Festival Theatre following the 2:30 matinee performance of *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*. There is no charge for the reading. Reservations are not required. Please plan to stay for a discussion afterward with the playwright, director, cast, and your fellow audience members.

A stylized graphic of a person's face wearing sunglasses, with a mustache and a large black shape covering the right side of the face.

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# COMING ATTRACTIONS

May 1 - 17, 2008

## *The White Rose*

by Lillian Groag

In 1943, five students at the University of Munich and their philosophy professor were tried and convicted for their anonymous leafleting campaign calling for opposition to the Nazi regime. They called themselves "The White Rose." Each year in April, 10,000 white roses are distributed on the University of Texas campus in remembrance of the approximately 10,000 people killed each day at Auschwitz.

June 12 - 28, 2008

## *The Underpants*

by Steve Martin

Steve Martin's adaptation of the original "wardrobe malfunction"! Humor and intrigue result from the failure of a fastener on a woman's undergarment. No, this isn't the Superbowl, but the instant fame and unusual consequences have Janet Jackson written all over it!

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Call the BFT office (933-2383) for information.