



**Birmingham
Festival
Theatre**

presents

*The
Santaland
Diaries* & *Season's
Greetings*

by **David Sedaris**

directed by
John Batson

Performances are 8:00 p.m.
Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays
November 29 - December 15, 2007

Sunday matinee is December 9 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.

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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!

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The Santaland Diaries & *Season's Greetings*

written by David Sedaris
directed by John Batson



featuring
Shawn Castle
and
Beth Kitchin



there will be one 15 minute intermission

Scenic Design - Mindy Wester
Lighting Design - Mindy Wester
Sound Design - Marc LeMay
Production Coordinator - Carl Sosnin
Costumes - Martha Summey
Set Decoration - Mindy Wester
Stage Managers - Sue Ellen Gerrells
and Mike Gerrells
Light Operator - Marc LeMay
Sound Operator - Marc LeMay

————— **Special thanks to** —————

Matthew Mielke of Birmingham-Southern College Theatre
Leah Luker & Birmingham Children's Theatre
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PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

Shawn Castle - Wow! how six years can go by so fast. Shawn is honored to be reprising this role on the BFT stage and even more honored to share the stage with Beth again. His last performance here was in *Take Me Out* a few seasons ago. Since then, Shawn has focused on life at home, some travel and the most challenging role of opening his own advertising agency. Together with two wonderful partners, the Modern Brand Company is now five weeks old (yes, a shameless plug). No stranger to the BFT stage, Shawn has been a member of the BFT board and has performed in numerous shows. Shawn hopes that the unique humor in this show gives everyone a much needed break from all the holiday hysteria. Thanks to John and Mindy for putting their creative spins on this edition, and a big thank you to my partner, Michael, for putting up with the rehearsals, shows and incessant late night line reading. Happy Holidays, everyone.

Beth Kitchin is thrilled to reprise her role as happy homemaker, Jocelyn Dunbar, having assumed the role at Birmingham Festival Theatre and Huntsville's Renaissance Theatre in 2001 and 2003. Beth's previous BFT holiday roles include the sultry Vixen in *The Eight: Reindeer Monologues* and the hot-blooded Zora Bloch in *Inspecting Carol*. Beth most recently appeared as Anna in David Mamet's *Boston Marriage* at Terrific New Theatre. You can catch Beth's nutrition and health tips every Monday morning on FOX6's *Good Day Alabama*.

John Batson (director) is a former board member of Birmingham Festival Theatre. Directing credits: *I'm Not Rappaport*, *The Lion in Winter*, *Touch of the Poet*, *A Delicate Balance*, *The Subject Was Roses* (BFT); *Oklahoma!*, *Anything Goes*, *Li'l Abner*, *Once upon a Mattress* (Leeds Arts Council); *Nunsense* (Carnegie Dinner Theatre); *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, *God's Trombones* (Wenonah High School). Most memorable acting credits at BFT include: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Landscape*, *Happy*

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PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

Birthday Wanda June, Cloud Nine, Gengarry Glen Ross. He has acted in many productions at other Birmingham theatres. Most memorable was *The Cocktail Hour* at Terrific New Theatre. He will play Norfolk in *The Man for All Seasons* in March (Virginia Samford Theatre) and will appear in *The Odd Couple* in April (Seasoned Performers' Salon Readers at Virginia Samford Theatre).

Sue Ellen and Mike Gerrells (stage managers) - Having just celebrated their 40th anniversary, they are delighted to be serving as co-stage managers for this production. They recently moved to Alabaster after Mike retired from Northrop Grumman Ship Systems. These theatre veterans have worked and performed in such diverse locations as Virginia, Mississippi, the Republic of Singapore, Mobile, AL, Ireland, San Diego, CA, and, most recently, Yokohama, Japan. Sue Ellen is a university instructor and award-winning actress and director with over 100 productions to her credit. Her favorite roles include Dotty (*Noises Off*), Du (*Keely and Du*), Lil (*Kindertransport*), Boo (*Last Night of Ballyhoo*), Isabella/Louise/Joyce (*Top Girls*), and Aunt Ruth (*Marvin's Room*). When she directs, Mike often designs the sets and/or stage manages. His credits include *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown, A Thurber Carnival, Spoon River Anthology, Oklahoma!, The Music Man, Parallel Lives, Fiddler on the Roof,* and *The Compleat Works of Shakespeare -*

Do some theatre in school and want to wet your feet again? Never done any theatre and want to give it a try?

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



Abridged. They are looking forward to becoming actively involved in the Birmingham theatre scene!

Mindy K. Wester (set & lighting designer) is thrilled to once again be a part of this wonderful production and reunited with BFT family. This marks her 8th set design and 25th lighting design in Birmingham's most unique theatre space.

Marc LeMay (sound designer; light & sound operator) is a composer, performer, and educator whose music has been heard throughout Birmingham and other parts of the country. He recently composed an extensive score of incidental music for BFT's *Quills*, and has written music and/or designed sound for over a dozen other produc-

tions throughout Birmingham. Marc has also appeared in local theatre as a stage manager and actor, and played guitar in the pit orchestra for Alabama Shakespeare Festival's *Man of La Mancha*. In 2007, he earned a B.A. with numerous honors in Music Technology from UAB, and continues to work and teach in Birmingham. You can find out more at marclemaymusic.com.

Martha Summey (costumes) is huge fan of Shawn Castle, Beth Kitchen and John Batson, as well as David Sedaris, so she is thrilled to have the opportunity to create a second incarnation of "Crumpet" for BFT audiences. Martha is the director of theatre at The Altamont School and the mother of two talented musicians. She also serves as state director for The Alabama Educational Theatre Association. As an actress, Martha has recently been seen as Mrs. Santa in *Don't You Just Love Christmas?* with Magic City Actor's Theatre and Amanda Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* with Altamont Theatre Project. At BFT, in addition to many costuming gigs, Martha directed *Apartment 3A* and was named Best Supporting Actress for *The Dining Room*.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

January 31 - February 16, 2008

Hiding behind Comets

by Brian Dykstra

The twins who run the bar are hoping to close early to go to a party. But a sinister stranger arrives asking questions. Slowly, a shocking mystery is uncovered that presents the twins with a terrifying possibility and an ethical dilemma.

February 21 - 24, 2008

Elegies for Angels, Punks, and Raging Queens

[fundraiser for local AIDS organizations - purchase separate tickets]

by Janet Hood and Bill Russell

This collection of poems and songs reflects the lives of people who have died of AIDS. It was inspired by the Names Project Quilt and *Spoon River Anthology*. This piece will make you laugh and cry as you remember those you know who are affected by this scourge.

March 20 - April 5, 2008

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife

by Charles Busch

The playwright makes mirth out of misery in this comedic story of a New York culture vulture on the verge of a nervous breakdown. Marjorie Taub, a doctor's wife, is a devoted consumer of high culture: mornings at the Whitney, afternoons at Zabar's, evenings with Kafka. Plunged into a mid-life crisis of Medea-like proportions, Marjorie is shaken out of her lethargy by the reappearance of a fascinating and somewhat mysterious childhood friend, Lee. What exactly is Lee up to?

ADVERTISE IN THIS PROGRAM!

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

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 leafletting 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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