



**Birmingham
Festival
Theatre**

presents

The Underpants

written by **Carl Sternheim**

adapted by **Steve Martin**

directed by
Don Sandley

Performances are 8:00 p.m.
Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays
June 12 - 28, 2008

Sunday matinee is June 22 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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The Underpants

written by **Carl Sternheim**

adapted by **Steve Martin**

directed by **Don Sandley**

featuring

Louise - Kelli Winn

Theo - Jacob Simmons

Gertrude - Katie Upchurch

Versati / King - James Lee Griner

Cohen - Meredith Murphy

Klingelhoff - George Inzer

TIME AND PLACE:

1910 Germany:

The Seat of Government

Assistant Director - Annie Hackney

Stage Manager - Sarah Bamberg

Set Design - Dana Gordan / Geoffrey Douglas

Lighting Design - Bill Camp

Sound Design - Don Sandley

Costume Design - Angel Tillman

Light/Sound Operator - Sarah Bamberg

Props - Nancy Whitt

Properties - Nancy Whitt

Production coordinator - Carl Sosnin

Special thanks to

Samford University Theatre

The American Village

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

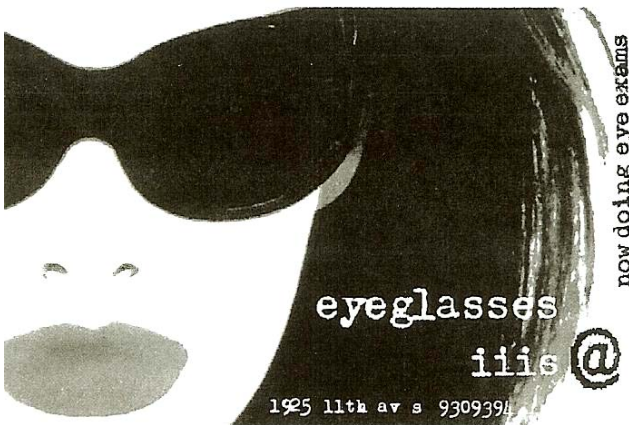
Kelli Winn (Louise) is approaching her Senior year at Samford University where she is majoring in both Theatre and Journalism/Mass Communication. She has been seen in past productions at Samford including: *Noises Off*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Electra*, and *A Piece of My Heart*. This is her first time working at BFT and she is thrilled to have the opportunity to work at such a great theatre in the heart of Birmingham. She would like to give special thanks to Dr. Sandley for giving her this opportunity, Annie Hackney for all of her understanding and help, and the rest of the cast for being such wonderful individuals and making this experience so memorable. Also, she would like to thank her family and friends for their never ending love and support.

Jacob Simmons (Theo) is a full-time student pursuing a Masters of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School and an MBA at Samford's Brock School of Business. *The Underpants* is Jacob's stage debut, unless you count the ridiculous collection of stupid faces and voices that he does each morning in front of the mirror (which, admittedly, are very good, but probably should not be counted).

Katie Upchurch (Gertrude) is from Decatur, GA. She recently graduated from Samford University with a BA in theater. You may have seen her as Shiela in *Boys Next Door*, Dotty Otley in *Noises Off*, or Mrs. Gloop from *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. She's very thankful to play this role in BFT's production of *The Underpants*. She would like to thank Don Sandley for this opportunity, the cast and crew for all of their hard work, her family and John for always supporting her.

James Lee Griner (Versati / King) is thrilled to be back on the stage at BFT for the third time in as many years. Lee previously performed here in *Elegies for Angels*, *Punks*, and *Raging Queens*, and in *Quills*. A native of Arkansas who has lived in Birmingham for almost 30 years, Lee works at UAB as a technical writer and editor. So far, his underpants have never fallen down except when they were supposed to.

Meredith Murphy (Cohen) is excited to be performing once again on BFT's stage. Recent stage credits include *Elegies for Angels*, *Punks and Raging Queens* and *The Children's Hour*. Professional credits include The Crystal Palace Dinner Theatre in Aspen, Co. Meredith has a B.A. in Theatre with an acting/directing emphasis and is currently



PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

working on earning a fifth year masters degree in education. Meredith also enjoys writing in third person.

George Inzer (Klingelhoff) returns to the stage after an absence of more than 15 years. He was active with the Montevallo Main Street Players in the late 1980's and early 1990's while he was an assistant professor in Mass Communications at the University of Montevallo. He appeared in productions of *Look Who's Laughing*, *West Side Story*, and the inaugural production of William Cobb's *Sunday's Child*, among others.

Don Sandley (director / sound design) has over thirty years experience working in theatre as a director, actor, professor and department chair. His areas of research and interest are contemporary Irish theatre, English theatre, playwriting, theatre history, and criticism. Dr. Sandley has made numerous research trips and teaching expeditions to England and Ireland and continues to write academic and creative works when not engaged in a directorial project. Recently, Dr. Sandley directed Rogers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella* and performed in the Samford University's production of *Twelfth Night*. Don is familiar to local audiences for his appearance in numerous local television commercials. BFT audiences may remember Don's direction of the Birmingham premier of *Intimate Apparel* and the critically acclaimed production of *Frozen*.

Annie Hackney (assistant director) is a senior theater major from Vestavia Hills. She was last seen as the Second Witch in *Macbeth* at Sloss Furnace. *The Underpants* has been an exciting and fruitful learning experience for her. She is thrilled to have had the chance to assistant direct such a wonderful and talented group of people.

Angel Tillman (costume design) is a graduate of Samford University with a degree in Theatre. She currently works at American Village as an Historical Interpreter and Assistant Costumer. She recently costumed BFT's production of *The White Rose*. She would like to thank Nancy Moore for allowing her to borrow boots and petticoats and for not being too critical of her costumes.

Nancy Whitt (props / properties) is Chair of the Department of English at Samford University and her areas of specialty are American Literature, Women's Studies, and Shakespeare. Recently Dr. Whitt was a consultant to the Muse of Fire production of *Macbeth* at Sloss Furnace. This is Nancy's first work at BFT.

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PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

Sarah Bamberg (stage manager / light operator / sound operator) is a graduate of Samford University with a degree in theatre. Sarah has appeared on stage in *Noises Off* and has been a part of numerous productions as a stage manager, costume designer and a wide range of technical positions. Sarah recently made her film debut as the lead actress in the *Watchers*, a film scheduled to premier on Japanese television.

Dana Gordan (set design / set construction) is recent Samford University graduate with a degree in Interior Design and a minor in art. Dana is pursuing a career in the area of theatre set design. Recently, Dana designed the set for *A Piece of My Heart* at Samford University, for which she was nominated for American College Theatre Festivals Regional Festival. She would like to thank Mr. Olson and Dr. Sandley for allowing her to include theatre in her passion for design.

Geoffrey Douglas (set design) is a graduate of Samford University with a degree in theatre. At Samford Geoffrey was featured in numerous productions as an actor, director and designer and received numerous awards including the schools best actor award. He has acted professionally and was on staff at Columbus State University as scene shop manager. Currently Geoffrey is on tour with the Student Life Drama Team.

Bill Camp (lighting design) is a recent graduate of Samford University, receiving a BA in Theatre and Design. His other lighting designs include *Momentum*, *Vincent in Brixton*, *Company*, *Reflexions*, and *A Piece of My Heart* all performed at Samford University. He has received outstanding lighting design awards for his design of *Company* and *A Piece of My Heart*. He would like to thank his family first and foremost and then all of his amazing friends for supporting him over the years.

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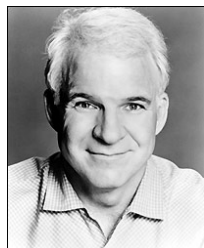
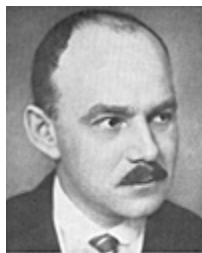
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A note from the director:

The Underpants is the product of two brilliant minds, the original author Carl Sternheim and the adaptor Steve Martin.

For those who may be unfamiliar with the original author **Carl Sternheim** was born April 1, 1878 in Leipzig, Germany and grew up in Berlin. His father was a Jewish banker and his mother was from a Protestant working-class family. He studied psychology, philosophy and the law at University. Sternheim married three times and the first two ended in divorce. But it was his second marriage, to a wealthy heiress that gave him the luxury of time and money to begin his writing career. Sternheim very quickly developed a reputation for biting satire and his target was the hypocrisy of the German middle-class. Sternheim was the darling of the German intelligentsia but, not surprisingly, drew the wrath of the government. Sternheim's work, including *The Underpants*, was banned in Germany and remained on the banned list throughout the reign of Adolph Hitler. Sternheim fled Germany during World War I and lived in Switzerland until death in 1942, at the height of World War II.



Steve Martin was born in Waco, Texas on August 14, 1945. By high school, he was already performing comedy routines at local coffee houses, juggling, playing the banjo and doing magic tricks. After college Martin landed a job writing for *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* in 1967, winning an Emmy Award in 1969. During the 1970's, Martin was a fixture on the *Tonight Show* and *Saturday Night Live*. Martin released several comedy albums including *A Wild and Crazy Guy*, which charted at #2 and featured the comic song *King Tut*, which became a Top-Forty hit. He won Grammy Awards for "Best Comedy Recording" in 1977 and 1978. By the end of the 1970's, Martin had achieved near "rock star" status selling out arenas for his live shows. Steve Martin's next foray was in film. His first, a seven-minute short that he wrote and starred in, was nominated for an Academy Award. In 1979, he wrote and starred in *The Jerk*, which was a critical and financial success. His film career remains strong. In the 1990's, Martin continued to make films, but also focused his attention on writing. In 1993, his play *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, about a fictional meeting between Picasso and Einstein in a Paris Bar, won critical acclaim, as did his novella *Shopgirl*, which was recently made into a film. Martin adapted Sternheim's *The Underpants* in 2002, which ran Off-Broadway at Classic Stage Company. For people of my generation Steve Martin is one of the most important cultural icons of our time. It is a treat to be a part of his work and to bring it to the BFT audience.

If you don't know BFT, come get acquainted.



Birmingham Festival Theatre's first performance, *The Threepenny Opera*, was on the Munger Auditorium stage on the Birmingham Southern College campus in May of 1972. Soon thereafter, we began staging shows in the theatre's current space above the Golden Temple in Five Points South. Originally Fred Jones Bakery, this building remains the best and most intimate theatre space in the city. Founded by Carl Stewart, Randy Marsh, and Vic Fichtner, BFT offered local residents theater unlike any with which they were previously familiar.

Since that time, we have staged over 200 productions involving more than 50 directors, 1,000 actors, 500 crew members, and 100,000 audience members. We strive to bring you a wide variety of directors and performers each season, each adding their own artistic vision to the mix. Birmingham is blessed with a rich pool of theatre talent who deserve to be seen and heard.

The theatre is managed by an all-volunteer, working board of directors. We have no employees. If you see it happen, it's because of dedicated volunteer efforts.

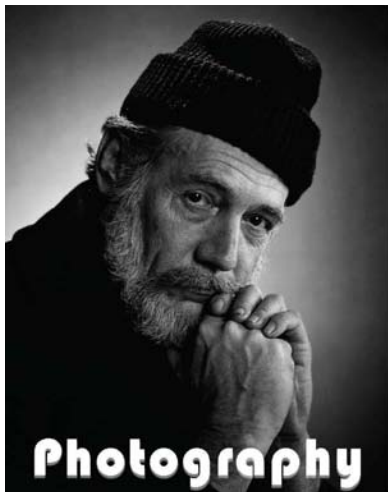


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The monies collected from tickets sales are only a small part of the finances needed to run our organization. While ticket income covers our day-to-day operating expenses, other revenue sources are needed for maintenance and capital improvement projects.

As a BFT supporter, you recognize the inherent value of theatre as a means to learn about ourselves, engage in civic dialogue, contemplate the present, and envision a better future. Your commitment to our success — as both a theatre-goer and financial supporter — is essential.

SEASON TICKET ADVANTAGES

- Use any of your seven season coupons in any combination for any of the season's shows
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A Preview of the

Buy your season tickets NOW!



September 11 - 27, 2008

Tuesdays with Morrie

written by Mitch Albom with Jeffrey Hatcher

directed by John Batson

featuring Sam Chalker and Douglas O'Neil, Jr.

The driven sports journalist renews his mentoring relationship with his former sociology professor after the vivacious old man is diagnosed with ALS. Join Mitch in learning the important life lessons that can best be learned from someone who is dying. This affecting drama is based on the bestselling memoir.

October 23 - November 8, 2008

Rabbit Hole

written by David Lindsay-Abaire

directed by Janelle Cochrane

The author of last season's quirky comedy, *Fuddy Meers*, takes on more serious matters: the accidental death of a child. The profound effects on the family and the stranger at whose hands the accident occurred will awaken powerful feelings in all of us.

December 4 - 20, 2008

The Little Dog Laughed*

written by Douglas Carter Beane

The heart-throb actor is just about to get the role of a lifetime when rumors begin to circulate hinting at his homosexuality. His distraught agent, concerned about her percentage, begins damage control related to this "slight recurring case of homosexuality." And, the laughs continue with the aid of the "rent boy" who's looking for love and the "girlfriend" who's looking for a home.

**rights pending*

BFT wants you to be a part of our 38th season. Whether you have theatre experience (no matter how long ago) or have none, come share the joy of Birmingham's premier community theatre. Tell us how to get in touch with you and what areas of involvement interest you. Speak to us in the lobby, call us, or leave a message on our website. You may be an actor, a director, a designer, a technician, a publicist, a fund-raiser, a cheerleader, or lots of other things. There's bound to be something unique and valuable you can bring to BFT. Please join us.

2008-2009 Season

Enjoy and support local theatre.



January 29 - February 14, 2009

Kindertransport

written by Diane Samuels

directed by Sue Ellen Gerrells

In 1938 and 1939, nearly 10,000 unaccompanied Jewish children escaped from Germany on trains headed for the freedom of Britain. Few ever saw their parents again. *Kindertransport* tells the story of Evelyn, a British woman in her fifties, and Eva, the nine year old German child she used to be. The nature of family is plumbed when Evelyn's daughter, Faith, discovers for the first time her German ancestry.

March 19 - April 4, 2009

Miss Witherspoon

written by Christopher Durang

Reincarnation just isn't Veronica's cup of tea. And she fights all efforts to send her back to earthly life. But, how're you gonna' beat cosmic (or is that karmic?) city hall? The ever prolific social satirist delivers again with a cast of familiars from the "other side."

April 30 - May 16, 2009

Sunset Limited

written by Cormac McCarthy

Two men on a train platform. One stops the other from jumping in front of the train. But he's not saved yet. An enigmatic relationship develops as can only be envisioned and told by the author of *No Country for Old Men* and *The Road*.

June 11 - 27, 2009

Screwups*

written by Justin Warner

Oops! Salome's much-milder-than-Herod's-interpretation request. Or the library book that appears to make things happen to those who read it. Or the more persistent than can be imagined telemarketer. You'll encounter these and more in this collection of one-acts subtitled "little plays about big mistakes" which will tickle you off-the-beaten-path funny bone.

**rights pending*

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