



**Birmingham  
Festival  
Theatre**

presents

# **The White Rose**

**by Lillian Groag**

directed by  
Sandra Taylor

Performances are 8:00 p.m.  
Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays  
May 1 - 17, 2008

Sunday matinee is May 11 at 2:30 p.m.

for reservations, call **933-2383**  
or go online at **[www. BFTonline.org](http://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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## **The Generous Gifts by**

**The George B. and Willa Mae Whatley Charitable Trust**

## **And, most importantly, we appreciate**

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 White Rose

written by Lillian Groag  
directed by Sandra Taylor

featuring

Hans Scholl - Franklin Slaton

Sophie Scholl - Rebecca Yeager

Jakob Schmidt - John Wright, Jr.

Gestapo Guard - Walter Garner

Robert Mohr - Steve Halsey

Mahler - Scott Nesmith

Bauer - Saxon Murrell

Alexander Schmorell - Justin Lenard

Christoph Probst - Jamie Schor

Willi Graff - Eric Young

## TIME AND PLACE:

The action of the play is both present and past during 1942-43 in Munich, Germany.

**there will be one 12 minute intermission**

**Set/Lighting Design** - Mandy Thomas

**Sound Design** - Marc LeMay

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

**Stage Manager** - Kathy Carlisle

**Costume Design** - Angel Tillman

**Sound Operator** - Justin Wallace

**Light Operator** - Sarah Schiesz

**Language Coach** - Kay Clements

The cast members would like to greet the audience after the play in the lobby.

## PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

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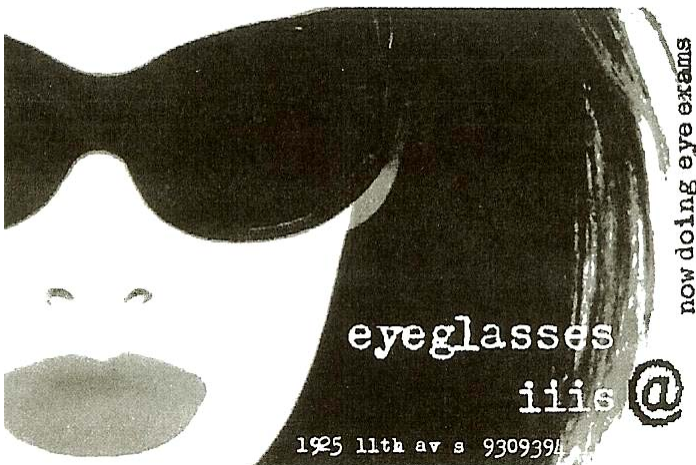
**Sandra Taylor (Director)** since retiring from Hoover High School in 2005 has directed *Collected Stories*, *Voice of Good Hope*, and was seen in last year's *The Children's Hour*, all at BFT. She is pleased to return as the director of this true, timely and important story of *The White Rose*. To quote Sandra, "I love getting the opportunity to work with members of the talented Birmingham theatre community as we bring to life this compelling true story that must never be forgotten."

**Walter Garner (Gestapo Man)** began studying acting at the Actor's Express in Atlanta. He continued his acting studies at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta where he completed the basic core curriculum as well as acting on camera. He played General Mackenzie in Agatha Christie's *Ten Little Indians*.

**Steve Halsey (Mohr)** played Will Parker in *Oklahoma!* under Sandra Taylor's direction in the summer of 2007 and is excited to be able to work with Sandra again. He has played the part of Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls* and Melchior in *Amahl and the Night Visitor*.

**Justin Lenard (Schmorell)** *The White Rose* is Justin's first experience with Birmingham Festival Theatre, and his first role since being in the theatre program at Hoover High School. Sandra Taylor taught him for three years in advanced theatre and directed him in several shows. Justin wants to thank Sandra Taylor, his parents, Brother Nick, friends and cast for this amazing experience.

**Saxon Murrell (Bauer)** a native of Birmingham, attended the University of Alabama where he majored in theatre and minored in French (making



## PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

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him unemployable in two languages), and is a veteran of regional theatre with over 20 years of training and performance throughout the Eastern half of the U.S. He has most recently appeared as Blake in Theatre Downtown's production of *Glengarry, Glen Ross*, Chief Inspector Jacques Clouseau in *The Pink Panther Strikes Again* at South City Theatre, Raynerd Chism in *Christmas Belles* at TNT, and as Ariel in Martin McDonough's *The Pillowman*, another Theatre Downtown production. He thanks his very talented director, castmates and crew, and the amazing people at BFT for bringing this important work to Birmingham and for making it such a wonderful experience.

**Scott Nesmith (Mahler)** was seen most recently as Baylen in Theatre Downtown's production of *Glengarry Glen Ross*. Other recent roles include Francis in *Elegies for Angels, Punks and Raging Queens* (BFT), Dr. Duval in *The Pink Panther Strikes Again* (South City Theatre) and Justice Lawrence Wargrave in *Ten Little Indians* (Theatre Downtown). Past favorite roles include Mr. Gilmer in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Banjo in *The Man Who Came to Dinner* and Judge Pearson in *The Trial of Ebenezer Scrooge*.

**Jamie Schor (Probst)** makes his BFT debut with this production. He is a recent graduate of the University of Montevallo with a BFA in Acting/Directing. He was last seen in the UM production of *Molly Sweeney*. He would like to thank his family, friends, cast, Sandra and Kathy for this great experience.

**Franklin Slaton (Hans)** is a BSC graduate recently returned to work in development. Favorite roles include Earnest Worthing in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Billy Bibbitt in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and Richard Rich in *A Man for All Seasons*. He can also be found performing stand-up comedy at finer venues throughout the city.

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## PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

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**John Wright, Jr. (Schmidt)** celebrates his thirtieth anniversary as a Birmingham stage performer with his appearance in *The White Rose*. He has previously performed at BFT in *Hunting Cockroaches* and *Breaking the Silence*. He will perform in his first one-man show, *Stories and Songs* on September 28 at VST's Martha Moore Sykes Studio Theatre.

**Rebecca Yeager (Sophie)** received her BA in Musical Theatre from Birmingham-Southern College, where she is now employed as an admission counselor. She has performed such roles as Shelby in *Steel Magnolias*, Catherine in *Boston Marriage*, The Mute in *Fantastiks*, Kristine in *Dollhouse*, and Aricia in *Phaedra*. She has also enjoyed performing in *Young Zombies in Love*, *Into the Woods*, *Guys and Dolls*, *A Chorus Line*, *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, and *Children of Eden*. She would like to thank Roy Hudson, Michael Flowers, Alan Litsey, and Patti Manning for believing in and constantly challenging her, Charles and her family for their love, support, and patience. Thank God for the gift and joy of theatre.

**Eric Young (Willi)** first appeared with Birmingham Festival Theatre as Ben in *Six Degrees of Separation*. Most recently he was seen as James Ling in Theatre Downtown's production of *Glengarry Glen Ross*. He has acted with such theatre companies as Boston's Speakeasy Stage Company, The Peterborough Players, and the Boston Conservatory. Eric is a full time theatre director and teacher at Erwin High School.

**Kathy Carlisle (Stage Manager)** is pleased to be stage managing again for Sandra Taylor. This is her first production at BFT. She would like to thank her husband, Jeff, and her sons, Michael and Mark, for helping with the production and being so supportive. Kathy is honored to help tell this story with this superlative cast.

**Mandy Thomas (Light/Sound Design)** began designing over twenty years ago at Gardner-Webb University where she received her B.A. in English and Theatre. Her design 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. Mandy is currently in her fifth year as Assistant Technical Director/Scene Shop Supervisor with Birmingham-Southern College Theatre, and is honored to be working with BFT again. Many thanks to Sandra Taylor

## PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

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for the opportunity to design, to her volunteers for the hard work, and to Matthew Mielke for good advice and ideas.

**Marc LeMay (Sound Design)** has been involved over the past eight years in over 30 Birmingham-area plays, in roles as varied as composer, sound designer, orchestra musician, stage manager, lighting and sound technician, voiceover artist, actor, set painter, and stage mopper. Primarily a composer, Marc also teaches music courses at UAB and guitar lessons throughout the city. This Fall he will begin graduate studies in music composition at the University of Michigan. More can be found at [www.marclamaymusic.com](http://www.marclamaymusic.com).

**Angel Tillman (Costume Design)** is a native Georgian living and working in Birmingham. She works at the American Village in Montevallo as an Historical Interpreter and assistant costume shop manager. She graduated from Samford University with a degree in Theatre. There she costume designed numerous shows including *Noises Off*, *The Secret Garden*, and *Inventing Van Goh*. She is happy to make her BFT premiere with *The White Rose*,

**Justin Wallace (Sound Operator)** is a music technology major at the UAB with a specialization in percussion. He is involved with the UAB Percussion Ensemble, Steel Band, Jazz Combo, and Jazz Ensemble, and can be seen performing in Birmingham playing the vibraphone, as well as world percussion with John Scalici and his Get Rhythm! programs.

**Sarah Schiesz (Light Operator)** is a senior Theatre major at Birmingham-Southern College. She has been seen on the stage at 'Southern in the opera *Hansel and Gretel* as the witch and in *Urinetown* as Josephine Strong. Her behind the scenes work at 'Southern includes being the Co-Light Designer for the spring operas *The Telephone* and *The Consul*. She is happy to be back at BFT; her last time here was as Heidi in *Fuddy Meers*.

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## Special thanks to

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Southside Baptist Church	Birmingham-Southern College Theatre
Dr. Alan Litsey	Janelle Cochran
Dr. David Callaghan	Rebecca A. Schiffman
John Batson	Neil Kirkpatrick
Jeff Wallace	Jane Hicks
Dr. Jeff Reynolds	Kyle Holman
Digital Motion Pictures	Matthew Mielke

# The playwright's preface to the script:

In 1942, a group of students of the University of Munich decided to actively protest the atrocities of the Nazi regime and to advocate that Germany lose the war as the only way to get rid of Hitler and his cohorts. They asked for resistance and sabotage of the war effort, among other things. They published their thoughts in five separate anonymous leaflets which they titled "The White Rose," and which were distributed throughout Germany and Austria during the Summer of 1942 and winter of 1943. They were apprehended and executed during February and April of 1943. All we know of the arresting officer is that, at the last moment, he tried to save their lives.

Today there are public monuments and memorials to their names throughout Germany and they are remembered yearly on the anniversary of their deaths by organizations of active and passive resistance the world over who meet at Perlacher Cemetery, just outside Munich, where they are buried. As the American Jewish Congress said on the occasion of the 1985 memorial: a Jew in Nazi Germany didn't have a choice. All these young people had to do to save their lives was to keep their mouths shut.

*"There are some things which have not lived in vain."  
e.e. cummings*

The following is not biography, the domain of which I do not believe is the stage or screen, but an attempt to understand how certain catastrophes happen. We have all conveniently accustomed ourselves to consider "evil" as originating elsewhere: other people (preferably mentally imbalanced, but if pathology were not readily provable, then at least foreign), other places (never here, never with us, never next door), other governments (never our own). Most importantly, great national catastrophes are usually ascribed to amorphous masses of people, never taking into account that said masses are composed of individuals who, at one point or other, must have had a moment of choice. Above everything else, in our "glamorizing" of evil (by that I mean in our insistent placing it into the realm of the "exotic" and out of the common place) we have accustomed ourselves to view it as a premeditated leap of the mind into the unfathomable abysses of the soul; never as the gradual, imperceptible sliding into the moral chaos responsible for great communal disasters. In other words, the work of monsters, never of people like you or me.

*-Lillian Groag*

# Please join us Sunday, June 1, at 2:30 for a fund-raiser for The Seasoned Performers

This event is noteworthy, as The Seasoned Performers present a special public performance of our Readers presenting *Canton Culture Club* and our performers' touring play, *It's Perfectly True*, both written by the late Randy Marsh. This festive occasion will happen at Birmingham Festival Theatre (an organization Randy helped found) followed by a wine reception. Tickets are only \$15, and donations above this price are greatly appreciated. All proceeds go to The Seasoned Performers. Call 205-978-5095 for tickets.

Our Twenty-Fifth Touring Season kicks off with a new production of *It's Perfectly True* based on the Hans Christian Anderson classic. The *Canton Culture Club* reminds us of the many clubs and meetings we've attended!

Don't forget to make your appointment at the Curl Up & Dye Salon where the Seasoned Performers catch up on all the latest gossip. The things you hear at this beauty shop will make your hair curl! It's Perfectly True!!

*Canton Culture Club* features

Jane Mcryary, Leigh Anne Botters, M. H. Smith, Frances Cook

*It's Perfectly True* features

Amy Grohs, Boots Carroll, Beth McCord, Dorvy Jean, Arlene Hall



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## Upcoming Events

ELTON JOHN & TIM RICE'S

# AIDA

THE TIMELESS LOVE STORY

May 22 - June 1, 2008

Thu - Sat at 7:30 PM

Sun at 2:30 PM

For Tickets visit our website

[www.mcactorstheatre.com](http://www.mcactorstheatre.com)

or call 205-914-4648

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**VIRGINIA SAMFORD**  
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## SUMMER WORKSHOPS

Young Performers'

Summer Workshop (Ages 6-12)

June 30 - July 11, 2008

Teen Performers'

Summer Workshop (Ages 13-18)

July 21 - August 8, 2008

This workshop culminates in the East Coast Premier of the new musical "Scenes from a Teen's Life" by Greg Evans.

Workshops will be held at Berry Community Center (formerly Berry Middle School)

Classes are from 9-4 with early drop off and late pickup available.

Visit our website for more information/registration.

# A Preview of the Dates and other details to follow.



## Tuesdays with Morrie

written by Mitch Albom with Jeffrey Hatcher

directed by John Batson

featuring Sam Chalker and Doug O'Neil

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.

## 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*.

## Rabbit Hole

written by David Lindsay-Abaire

directed by Janelle Cochran

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.

## 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*

# 2008-2009 Season

## Stay tuned.



### Kindertransport

written by Diane Samuels  
directed by Sue Ellen Gerrells

In 1938, a few days after Kristallnacht, a push began in the British government to allow temporary admission of Jewish children who would later re-emigrate. As it worked out, of the thousands of children who were admitted to Britain, very few were ever reunited with their parents most of whom died under the Nazi regime. This is the fictional story of one such child.

### 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*

### 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.”

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.

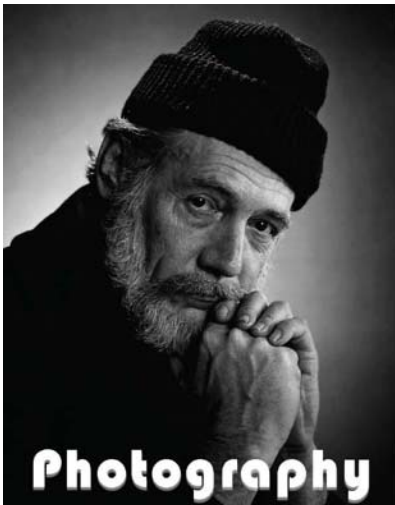
# COMING ATTRactions

June 12 - 28, 2008

## *The Underpants*

adapted by Steve Martin  
from Carl Sternheim's 1910 *Die Hosen*

Steve Martin's adaptation of the original "wardrobe malfunction"! Humor and intrigue result from the failure of a fastener on a woman's undergarment. From 1910 to 2008, and nothing's changed. People's attitudes and aspirations are ever the same.



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