



**Birmingham
Festival
Theatre**

presents

THE SUNSET LIMITED
A NOVEL IN DRAMATIC FORM
BY CORMAC MCCARTHY

DIRECTED BY
QUINTON COCKRELL

Performances are 8:00 p.m.
April 30, May 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16
Sunday matinee is April 10 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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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!

2008-2009 BFT Board of Directors

Jason Adams	John Falkenberry	Heath Mixon
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THE SUNSET LIMITED

BY CORMAC MCCARTHY

DIRECTED BY QUINTON COCKRELL

Featuring

Black - Robert W. Hill

White - Edwin Booth

INTERMISSION: 12 Minutes

Assistant Director - Ryan Swain

Set Design - Mindy K. Wester

Lighting Design - Mindy K. Wester

Light Operator - Ryan Swain

Sound Operator - Ryan Swain

Production Coordinator - Carl Sosnin

Special thanks to

Lou Dina

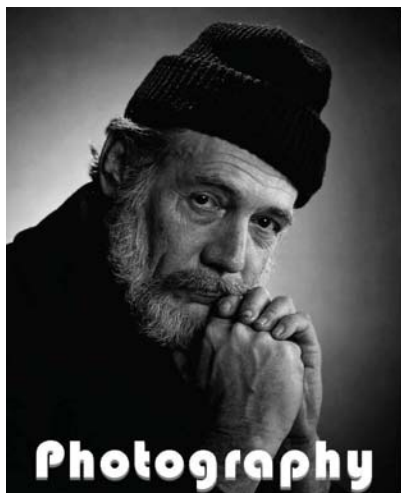
Drs. Buck, Buck, McKay, and Rothman

St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

Robert W. Hill (Black) is a lifelong resident of Birmingham and a graduate of UAB. His past BFT performances include *The Black Poet* and *Elegies for Angels, Punks, and Raging Queens*. Robert has appeared in a number of local independent films: *Johnny Flynton* (2002 Academy Award Nominated Film, Live Action Short) and *High Expectations* (2007 Platinum Remi). His commercial work includes TV spots for Brookwood Hospital, Alabama Department of Tourism, and UAB Basketball. He was recently featured in a gospel music video for singer Marvin Sapp: *Never Would Have Made It*. Behind every great man there is a woman. Behind every average guy who gets to do great stuff, there's a wonderful woman. Robert wishes to thank the wonderful woman in his life, his wife Barbara.

Edwin Booth (White) is very pleased to be making his second appearance on the BFT stage. Last season he was in Festival Theatre's production of *Moonlight & Magnolias*. Last summer he was seen in City Equity's *True West* and *The God of Hell*, both by Sam Shepard. Edwin is the Technical Associate for the Seasoned Performers, Birmingham's senior adult theatre, whose production of Dr. Andrew Duxbury's *Grimm and Bear It* will be performed here at BFT on Sunday, May 31st. Dr Duxbury is a member of UAB's Center for the Aging and Edwin not only is the stage manager, he plays one



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PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

too. Edwin wishes to thank Quinton, Robert, Ryan, Carl and, especially, his wife, Marlene.

Quinton Cockrell (director) is a native of Birmingham Alabama. He attended Birmingham-Southern College and The Alabama Shakespeare Festival's Professional Actor Training Program. He has worked with numerous theatre companies in New York City and throughout the United States, including Riverside Shakespeare Company, Westbeth Theatre, John Houseman Theatre, Playwright's Horizons, Orlando Shakespeare Festival, Studio Arena Theatre, Heritage Repertory Company, and Birmingham Children's Theatre. He has worked extensively with the Alabama Shakespeare Festival Southern Writer's Project since 2002. Quinton is a recipient of the Alabama State Council on the Arts Fellowship in playwriting for his plays *Low Life* and *Shot House*. *Shot House* premiered in Paris at L'Ogresse Theatre in July 2007.

Mindy K. Wester (set/lighting) has lost count of how many shows she has designed for BFT (affectionately known as her home away from home) or how many times she has watched the sun rise in the courtyard. "If it weren't for the last minute, I'd never get anything done." Thanks to Carl for being sure that I could get this done.



Next Season at BFT

We hope you will join us for the 2009-2010 theatre season at BFT.

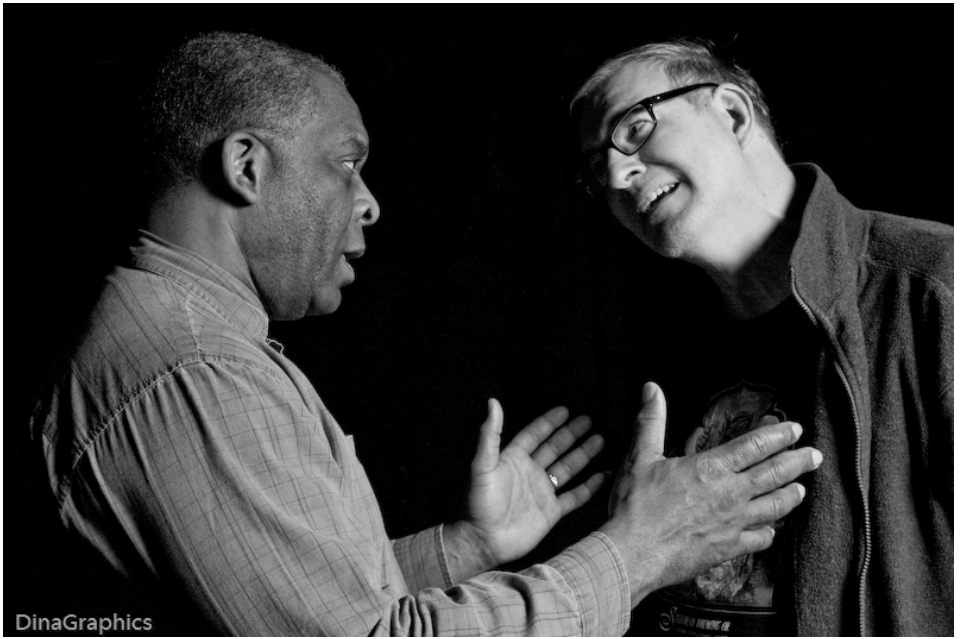
We will be announcing the season and offering season subscriptions for sale during the run of *Screwups!* in June (see back of this program). Included in the season are:

The Cocktail Hour by A. R. Gurney

Bus Stop by William Inge

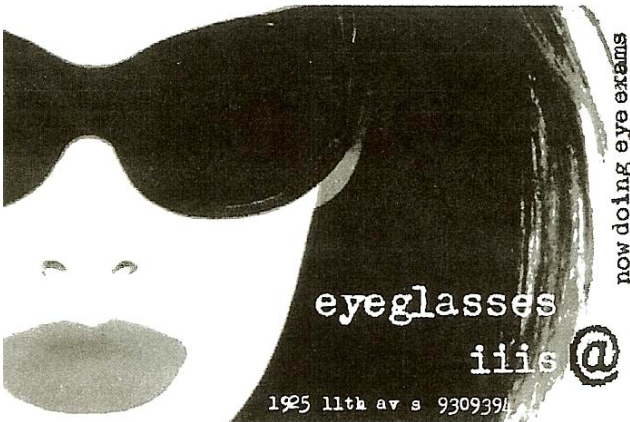
Tobacco Road by Jack Kirkland





In the end *The Sunset Limited* does not ask you to believe either man's point of view about life and death. It does, however, provoke us to wonder why we're here and to what end. The ultimate question raised by McCarthy isn't should we live or die, but rather what should we do while we're living.

-theatermania.com



Comments from the director

When I was a 15 year old high school student, I appeared in a production of *The Hostage* by Brendan Behan produced at Birmingham Festival Theatre. The script, which I keep and treasure, has the words “My first real play!” scrawled on the inside front cover.

The encouragement of a dedicated high school mentor and Birmingham Festival Theatre opened my eyes to a world of art I could not have otherwise expected to understand, let alone be a part of. I have gone on to professionally act, direct and write for the theatre. Even now, every play I attempt to write takes place, in my mind, on the stage of BFT. I say all of this to communicate the pleasure with which I approached the opportunity to direct Cormac McCarthy’s play *The Sunset Limited* at Birmingham Festival Theatre. How interesting it is - the way life often brings us back to where we started.

Life’s journey is the focus of *The Sunset Limited*. Is that journey *from* nothingness *to* nothingness with a lot disguised nothingness in between? One of *Sunset*’s characters, White (Edwin Booth), would answer “yes.” White attempts to take his life by leaping in front of a subway train in New York City. He is saved by Black (Robert Hill) who takes White back to his Harlem apartment until he can “figure out what to do with” him. Black believes that if he can find the right words, he can make White see that life has more to offer than his “suicidal depression” will allow him to perceive. Will Black succeed or will White end up back on the platform waiting for the next “Sunset Limited?” *The Sunset Limited* is McCarthy’s rumination on whether living this life is worth the trouble and confronts many of the conclusions reached by those of us who are adept at thinking our way out of happiness.

You know Cormac McCarthy as the Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist for *The Road*, whose film adaptation is scheduled to be released later this year. His novel *No Country for Old Men* was adapted for the screen and won four 2007 Academy Awards. As you would expect, *Sunset*’s dialogue is dense and meaningful.

- Quinton Cockrell, 2009

Coming Soon

May 22 & 23, 2009 at 8pm

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June 11 - June 27, 2009



Screwups!

written by Justin Warner
directed by Ellise Mayor



Think the guys at AIG made some mistakes? Folks at the SEC? Wait ’til you meet some of the folks in this collection of one-acts subtitled “little plays about big mistakes.” Things did get out of hand for them.

May 31, 2009

The Seasoned Performers

Join BFT as we celebrate Older Americans Month with a special public performance benefiting The Seasoned Performers on Sunday May 31 at 3 PM.

Alabama's only senior adult theatre company is celebrating 25 years of bringing plays and readings to the people of Alabama. Enjoy an afternoon with The Seasoned Readers presenting *Cinderella's Prince: Beyond Happily Ever After* by company founder Martha Haarbauer and The Seasoned Performers touring production of *Grimm and Bear It* by Dr. Andrew Duxbury of UAB's Center for Aging.

Tickets are \$15 including a wine and cheese reception following the performance. For more information call The Seasoned Performers at 205-978-5095.