



**Birmingham
Festival
Theatre**
presents

BECKY SHAW

BY GINA GIONFRIDDO

directed by
MEL CHRISTIAN

January 12 through January 28, 2011
Thursdays, Fridays, & Saturdays at 8:00
2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 22
for reservations, call **933-2383**
Visit us 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 100,000 audience members.

We Gratefully Acknowledge

2011-2012 Contributor

Edward and April Miller

2011-2012 Donor

Rachel Ferguson

Jimmie Hess

Donald P. Moore

Dorvalyn Jean

Don Cano

2011-2012 Friend

George Inzer

Mike & Pauline Neilson

Jan & Robert Collins

Jack & Carole Armistead

Jason Adams

Lee Griner

Dr. Emily Omura

David & Ina Russakoff

Bob & Bobbie Glaze

Jeff & Lisa Bramer

Fred Carter

Haden Gaines Marsh

2011-2012 Member

David and Ann Fraley

Harvey Ragland

Pat Fresk

Sue Michalek

Gerda Carmichael

The Generous Gift 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!

2011-2012 BFT Board of Directors

Tania Adams

Janelle Cochrane

Holly Croney Dikeman

Mindy Wester Egan

Lee Griner

Gonzalo Gurmendi

Patrick Johnson

Ginny S. Loggins

Haden Gaines Marsh

Leah McCraney

Edward C. Miller

Harvey Ragland

David Seale

Carl H. Sosnin

BECKY SHAW

directed by Mel Christian

Place and Time: New York City, Providence and Boston. The Present.

CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Suzanna Slater - Annalisa Keuler Crews
Max Garrett - Hal Word
Susan Slater - Pam Elder
Andrew Porter - Cris Morriss
Becky Shaw - Holly Croney Dikeman

THERE WILL BE ONE 12-MINUTE INTERMISSION.

Stage Manager - William Brisky
Set/Lighting Design - Mindy Wester Egan
Properties - Hal Word, Mel Christian, UAB
Department of Theatre
Sound Designer - Mel Christian
Scenic Construction/Painting - Mindy Wester Egan/
Ryan Humphries
Light Operator - Mindy Wester Egan
Sound Operator - Ryan Humphries
Running Crew - William Brisky, Jimmy Dunn
Production Coordinator - Ginny S. Loggins

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Kelly Allison, The UAB Department of Theatre
Samford University Department of Theatre
David Glenn, Jeff McKee, J. Marc Quattlebaum, Danny Smalley,
Nora Whitten, Bonnie Wootan, Hal Word

BREAKDOWN OF SCENES

ACT I

1. A mid-range hotel in New York City.
2. Andrew & Suzanna's apartment in Providence, RI. Eight months later.

ACT II

1. A Downtown Street in Providence, RI. Two days later, Monday.
2. Max's Hotel Room in Boston. That same evening, Monday.
3. Becky's Apartment. The following night, Tuesday.
4. Max's Hotel Room in Boston. The following night, Wednesday.
5. A Café. Thursday.
6. Andrew & Suzanna's Apartment. The same day, Thursday.
7. Susan Slater's Home in Richmond Virginia. Saturday.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

If I could don my pithy helmet and journey across time to translate caveman scribbles or hieroglyphs, I wager I'd find a story or two of bad romance: the misrepresented maiden who did not rate the Hereford she was traded for; the nobleman whose title was about as bogus as his accent. There's a reason we are in this theatre centuries later, settling in for another tale of misbegotten love. We relate. We will always relate so long as men and women try to pair up (in any combination.) With 21st century dating we can log on and flip through potential lovers like ye rolodexes of olde. We make value judgments in the privacy of our own homes; we literally and figuratively "rip out and compost," as Max says, with the push of a button. It's interesting to me that Gionfriddo, in keeping with her obvious love for the delicate twists and turns of Austen or Thackeray, chooses a much more traditional setup. Max and Becky are paired on a blind date, and the motives are completely endearing. Suzanna and Andrew, still basking in newly-wedded bliss, want to bring together two people that mean a lot to them. Let's be real here; it rarely, rarely works out that way.

But *Becky Shaw* is about much more than a blind date gone wrong. It's about lovers, family and friends and our responsibility to the people that frame our lives. Who, indeed, are we responsible for? Certainly the ones that provide love, security and devotion despite our failings, but what then of the stranger that comes to our door? When we let a stranger into our lives, the boundaries become blurred. And we do let strangers in daily, don't we? No one wants to be alone, but by what moral code do we sample and cast off? Who makes those rules? In this play everyone has an agenda. I'll leave it to you to decide whose is the more "noble." I identify with Gionfriddo, who allows the character Susan to surmise that in the universal battle of the sexes we might be victim or con artist. Most of us fall somewhere in between.

Mel Christian
Director, *Becky Shaw*

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

Annalisa Keuler Crews (Suzanna) is a school librarian at Homewood High School. After beginning her love of theatre in high school, Annalisa continued to perform at the University of Alabama and The University of Montevallo. For the past five years she has been active in Birmingham community theatre. Some of her favorite roles include Joanie in *Little Footsteps*, the Stepmother in *Into the Woods*, Frenchie in *Cabaret*, and Scraps in *Talking With...* also at BFT. She would like to thank Hal for sending her the script and Mel for this amazing opportunity.

Holly Crony Dikeman (Becky) was most recently seen on the Birmingham Festival Theatre stage in the musical *Quilters*. She previously appeared at BFT as Aouda in *Around the World in 80 Days*, the Snake Handler in *Talking With...* and Cherie in *Bus Stop*. Other BFT credits include *The Great Wrong Way* and *Miss Witherspoon*. She appreciates your support of the arts in Birmingham!

Pam Elder (Susan) is pleased to return to Birmingham Festival Theatre after her first performance here in 2001. At that time she had come back to the theatre after untold years of raising children and working as a speech-language pathologist. Pam has now performed in numerous Birmingham community theatres including the LJCC (*Off Broadway*), Terrific New Theatre (*Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein, My Name Will Always Be Alice, The Dixie Swim Club*), BFT (*Angels in America, Kindertransport, Tobacco Road*) and South City Theatre (*Christmas Belles, On Golden Pond, Come Back to the Five and Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean, The Octette Bridge Club*). Growing up in Dallas, Texas, Pam had the thrill of attending the first Teen Theater class at the celebrated Dallas Theater Center and later attending the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, England.

M. Cris Morriss (Andrew) is excited to be appearing on the BFT stage for the first time. After graduating from Homewood High School he went on to receive a BA in Theatre from Jacksonville State University. From there he has performed with the Virginia Stage Company as George Merry in *Treasure Island* as well as touring the Norfolk area as Rikki Tikki Tavi in *The Adventures of Rikki Tikki Tavi, Tecumseh!* in Chillicothe, OH as Capt. MacDonald as well as Sikes; Theatre West Virginia in Beckley, WV as Johnse Hatfield in *The Hatfields and McCoys*, Le Fou in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*, Johnse Hatfield in *The Last Hanging in Pike County*; The Mill Mountain Theatre in Roanoke, VA as Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol*, and Paul in *Alexander and the Terrible Horrible*

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

No Good Very Bad Day. Here in Birmingham, Cris has worked with Birmingham Children's Theatre touring around Alabama and the Southeast as Professor/Aslan in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, Colonel (et al.) in *Play to Win! The Jackie Robinson Musical*, the Wizard in *The Wizard of Oz*, Sergeant Garcia/Padre Mateo in *Zorro!*, Hansel in *Hansel and Gretel*, and Baltus in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Cris would like to thank all of his friends and family for all their support and love. As always, Cris wishes to dedicate all performances to his daughter Maddy.

Hal Word (Max), a native of Scottsboro, Alabama, is excited to be appearing in his second show at Birmingham Festival Theatre. He was last seen in BFT's 2010 fundraiser *The Great Wrong Way*. Hal has appeared in such area productions as Terrific New Theatre's *China: The Whole Enchilada*, Dane Peterson Theatre Series' *The Wild Party*, Park Players' *A Walk in the Woods*, Red Mountain Theatre Company's *The Sound of Music*, CenterStage Productions' *Into the Woods* and *Grease*, Muse of Fire's *Marriage a la Mode*, LJCC's *Once Upon a Mattress*, and The Leeds Arts Council's *My Fair Lady*. He has also appeared in Opera Birmingham's productions of *Aida*, *Turandot* and *Faust*. Hal spent the past two years at Birmingham Children's Theatre where he appeared as King Trueword in *The Frog Prince*, originated the role of Ms. Licorice in their premiere of *Hansel and Gretel*, and portrayed Lady Longnose in their production of *Cinderella*. He will next be seen February 12th in Dane Peterson Theatre Series' one-night-only concert reading of *The Normal Heart*, benefiting Birmingham AIDS Outreach. Hal wants to thank Mel for the opportunity to bring the complex character of Max to life.

Mel (Melissa) Christian (Director) is Program Manager for Theatre UAB, where she is in charge of grants, special events and their state-wide touring program. She is a native of Northport, AL and holds an MFA in Drama and Communications from the University of New Orleans. Formerly Mel served as Executive Director for The Alabama Conference of Theatre and Artistic Director of the MEL-O-DRAMA Children's Performing Arts Workshop. Past directing projects include *Loot*, *Twelve Angry Men*, *The Shawl*, *A Little Princess*, *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory*, *On Golden Pond*, *Little Women*, *Marvin's Room*, *Burn This* and her own adaptations of *The Three Musketeers* and *Alice In Wonderland*. In Birmingham she has appeared as Hannah Pitt in *Angels In America: Millennium Approaches* and *Perestroika*, Sister Bessie in *Tobacco Road*, Grace in *Bus Stop*, Evelyn in *Kindertransport* and Mona in *Come Back to the Five &*

PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES

Dime, Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean. In 2010 she received Theatre Downtown's Audience Choice Award as Best Lead Actress for her portrayal of Dora Strang in *Equus*.

Mindy Wester Egan (Set and Lighting Designer) has done lighting and/or set design for many, many shows at BFT, most recently for *Quilters* and *Anna in the Tropics*. She has also acted in several BFT shows, most recently playing the role of "Dragons" in *Talking With...*

William Brisky (Stage Manager) is a veteran stage manager, this being his 8th show stage managing at BFT. He also acts, but stage management has become his common theatre job. He most recently stage managed *That Championship Season* at BFT under the direction of Jonathan Goldstein and *Quilters* under the direction of Sandra Taylor. William is proud to tell everyone that theatre keeps him sane. He would like to thank you for promoting theatre at BFT and hopes you enjoy the show.

Ryan Humphries (Sound Operator), a regular crew member for Ex-temporaneous Theatre Company, is proud to once again be crewing for BFT. A full-time student at UAB, Ryan, in his rare free time, is an avid writer, working on his first novel, tentatively titled *Night Wolves Hunt*.

Jimmy Dunn (Running Crew) is happy to be working tech for his second show at BFT, having previously been the Sound Operator for *Quilters*. Jimmy is a retired teacher and the Minister of Music at Woodlawn Methodist Church.

ART IN THE LOBBY COURTESY OF...

STUDIO 212

THE PIECES IN THE LOBBY ARE THE WORK OF
Birmingham Artist

Bill Whetstone

MULTI-MEDIA ART, PAINTING, SCULPTURE, VIDEO
STUDIO 212 - 20TH ST N. DOWNTOWN BIRMINGHAM
GOOGLE BILL WHETSTONE 205-908-1890

Coming Soon

March 1-17, 2012

HOLY GHOSTS

Written by Romulus Linney

Directed by Bethe Ensey

Romulus Linney writes a moving and funny account of unsophisticated people in moral and emotional crisis in the Deep South. Nancy Shedman, in an effort to escape the drunken attentions of her husband Coleman, has moved in with a band of Pentecostal snake handlers and fallen in love with their leader, Rev. Obediah Buckhorn. The play blends humor and poignancy as it probes into the circumstances and stories... of the various cult members. What happens when Coleman comes to claim his wife? **In 1976, BFT was one of the first theatres in the country to stage the play.** The Birmingham press hailed Linney as an author to be reckoned with "by every imaginable measuring stick" and the play as "an American gem cut out of the spirit of the mountain people – funny and deeply moving."

birmingham  **.org**

there's always something going on

Find Events. Post Events. Explore Your Community.

- Museums & Attractions
- Theatre & Dance
- Visual Arts
- History & Heritage
- Music
- Literature & Film
- Sports & Recreation
- Festivals & Special Events
- Classes & Lectures
- Kids & Family
- Civic & Community
- Food & Wine
- Health & Wellness
- Home & Garden

Search and post for free. A service of the Cultural Alliance.