

MR. BURNS

A POST ELECTRIC PLAY

BY ANNE WASHBURN



NOVEMBER 14 - 15 & 20 - 22 at 8 PM and 16 & 23 at 2 PM

SHEAFER LAB THEATER

\$10 GENERAL ADMISSION // TICKETS.DUKE.EDU

Duke | DEPARTMENT OF
THEATER STUDIES

Audience Advisory

This production contains visual and auditory elements that may be distressing to some viewers, including haze, strobe lighting effects, and recorded gunfire.

MR. BURNS

A POST ELECTRIC PLAY

By Anne Washburn

Playwrights Horizons, Inc. produced the New York City premiere of the play off-Broadway in 2013. Originally produced in June, 2012 by Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Washington, D.C.; Howard Shalwitz, Artistic Director and Jeffrey Herrmann, Managing Director.

Mr. Burns was commissioned by The Civilians, New York, NY; Steven Cosson, Artistic Director.

For the language of the remembering of the Simpsons' episode, "Cape Feare," the author would like to credit the Civilians actors involved in the initial workshop: Quincy Tyler Bernstine, Maria Dizzia, Gibson Frazier, Matt Maher, Jennifer Morris, Colleen Werthmann, and Sam Breslin Wright.

MR. BURNS

A POST ELECTRIC PLAY

DIRECTOR

Jeffrey Storer

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Sofia Bennett*

DRAMATURG

Jules Odendahl-James

MUSIC DIRECTOR COMPOSER

Bart Matthews

MOVEMENT DIRECTOR

Jeff A.R. Jones

SCORE

Michael Friedman

LYRICS

Anne Washburn

SCENIC DESIGNER

Sonya Drum

COSTUME DESIGNER

Derrick Ivey

LIGHT DESIGNER

Bill Webb

SOUND DESIGNER

Sarah Roberts

STAGE MANAGER

Larrabee Ellenberg

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Skylar Noël

CAST

Jenny	Caroline Edmondson*
Sam	Kiestin Jackson*
Matt	Cooper Herrett*
Colleen	Ally Doss*
Maria	Alaina Guo*
Gibson	Aidan Klein*
Quincy	Seneca Russell*
Ensemble/Nelson/Understudy	Ryan Stretch*
Ensemble/Bart	Jadyn Schwartz*
Ensemble/Understudy	Britton Scott*

NOTES ON TIME

This play is set in the very near future
Then seven years after that
Then seventy-five years after that

*Every story ends on
a dark and raging river*

There will be two ten-minute intermissions between acts.
No one will be admitted after the doors close after intermissions.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Production Manager	Thom Quintas
Technical Director	Bill Webb
Costume Shop Supervisor	Hannah J. Haverkamp
Sound Supervisor	Ethan Eldred
Scene Shop Supervisor	David Berberian
Props Artisan	Tim Domack
Scenic Artisan	Miyuki Su
Graphic Designer	Rebekah Miel
Photographer	Huth Photo

PRODUCTION RUN CREW

Light Board Operator	Lai Jiang*
Sound Board Operator	Lauren Nicole Land*
Stage Crew	Julia Ma*
Wardrobe	Sophia Horridge Yuha Kim Jackie Park Kenji Tran

COSTUME SHOP CREW

Erica Gatewood, Aldair Gonzalez Castillo, Sophia Horridge, Yuha Kim, Fayanne Lin, Jackie Park, Charlie Ratterree, Sophia Sang, Sophia Solomon, Preston Swarat, Kenji Tran

SCENE SHOP CREW

Fiona Bolte-Bradhurst, Ryan Khan, Madison Lamptey, Trinity Quaye, Paris Reynosa

* Students enrolled in Theater Studies Mainstage Production courses THEATRST 350-1, taught by Jeffrey Storer, or THEATRST 226S, taught by Ethan Eldred.

In Memoriam

Tim Carroll (The Railroad Man), Randy Wyatt, Greg, Robert, Gary, Urso and Pete and Ruth

Special thanks to Edward Hunt, the cast and crew of *Mr. Burns* at Manbites Dog Theater, and Chuck Catotti.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

An Incomplete List

No more diving into pools of chlorinated water lit green from below. No more ball games played out under floodlights. No more porch lights with moths fluttering on summer nights. No more trains running under the surface of cities on the dazzling power of the electric third rail. No more cities. No more films...

No more pharmaceuticals. No more certainty of surviving a scratch on one's hand, a cut on a finger while chopping vegetables for dinner, a dog bite...

No more countries, all borders unmanned.

No more fire departments, no more police. No more road maintenance or garbage pickup...

No more Internet. No more social media, no more scrolling through litanies of dreams and nervous hopes and photographs of lunches, cries for help and expressions of contentment and relationship-status updates with heart icons whole or broken, plans to meet up later, pleas, complaints, desires, pictures of babies dressed as bears or peppers for Halloween.

- AN EXCERPT FROM *STATION ELEVEN* BY EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL

A Landslide Of Remembered Losses

In this moment she felt that she had been robbed of an enormous number of valuable things, whether material or intangible: things lost or broken by her own fault, things she had forgotten and left in houses when she moved: books borrowed and not returned, journeys she had planned and had not made, words she had waited to hear spoken to her and had not heard, and the words she had meant to answer with bitter alternatives and intolerable substitutes worse than nothing, and yet inescapable: the long patient suffering of dying friendships and the dark inexplicable death of love — all that she had had, and all that she had missed, were lost together, and were twice lost in this landslide of remembered losses...

She laid the purse on the table and sat down with the cup of chilled coffee, and thought. I was right not to be afraid of any thief but myself, who will end by leaving me nothing.

- AN EXCERPT FROM "THEFT" BY KATHERINE ANNE PORTER, 1930

I'm Troy McClure.

You might remember me from such films as

Today We Kill, Tomorrow We Die and *Gladys, the Groovy Mule*.

- FROM THE "HOMER ALONE" EPISODE OF THE SIMPSONS (1992)

JEFFREY STORER

DRAMATURG'S NOTE

Before. After. Before.

“all storytelling is a remaking of our past in order to create our future”

- Anne Washburn, 2015

Playwright Anne Washburn was born “circa-1970” to a painter and non-profit housing official in Berkeley, CA. She participated in the Bay Area’s acclaimed A.C.T. Youth Conservatory, and at Reed College she wrote and directed her first play, *Bloode*, a gothic revenge tragedy. After temping and writing radio plays post-college, she entered graduate school at NYU. In the city she was mentored by acclaimed playwrights — Tony Kushner, Mac Wellman, Maria Irene Fornes, Migdalia Cruz — and met collaborators who would remain in her circle for decades.

Since the early 2000s, she has been a fixture in the famed downtown theater scene, an associate artist with The Civilians, a founding member of the 13P playwrights’ collective (2004-2012) and a Guggenheim Fellow. Her newest play, *The Burning Cauldron of Fiery Fire*, her third directed by The Civilians Artistic Director Steve Cosson, will have premiered in NYC three weeks prior to the production of *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* you’ll see today.

Mr. Burns began its life when The Civilians commissioned Washburn for a script in 2008, but she had ruminated on the apocalyptic for years. At A.C.T., she encountered a writing exercise that asked her to imagine herself as a doctor responding to a great global plague. She grew up hearing regular earthquake warnings and facing nuclear holocaust fears prior the collapse of the Soviet Union. She was in graduate school in New York City on September 11, 2001, grappling with a disaster that until that moment seemed something only found on movie screens. Such a mix of experiences seemed to coalesce into the question posed by her commission: “What shared stories would people tell themselves after a catastrophe?”

Calling themselves a “theater of investigation,” The Civilians devise much of their work from interviews collected *without* recording devices: actors ask questions, listen, then write the conversation from memory. Working with company members in the rented rehearsal space of an underground bank vault, Washburn decided the likely pop culture touchstone post-collapse would be *The Simpsons*. It was a show with archetypal characters centered around a nuclear(!) family and a close-knit community, elements she thought people surviving an apocalypse would remember with longing and seek to recreate in the aftermath. Washburn asked three actors — Matthew Maher, Maria Dizzia and Jennifer Morris — to choose an episode and retell the story on the spot. The first time, Matt supplied most of *The Simpsons* content. In the second go-round, Maria and Jenny added as their memories were spurred by Matt’s details. Then Washburn invited new actors to see what information they would bring. These iterations became the first act of *Mr. Burns*, most of it written, word for word, name for name, from these sessions.

Washburn sets her play in “the very near future,” and each act moves us further away from the inciting incident: a global pandemic. In 2025, no production of *Mr. Burns* can ignore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on how we understand the world it depicts.

BIOGRAPHIES

Sofia Bennett (Assistant Director) is a sophomore from Miami, FL majoring in Biological Sciences on the pre-Health track with minors in Chemistry and Theater Studies. This is her first production at Duke, but she has been in several plays throughout high school and participated in many thespian competitions with monologue and ensemble scene pieces. Sofia thanks her unconditionally loving and encouraging family, as well as her friends who continue to support her passions. She also gives special thanks to the cast, crew and collaborators of *Mr. Burns* for their enthusiasm and dedication to this show — she has learned so much from their efforts. She is especially grateful to Jeff Storer for this opportunity and for taking her along the process of developing this production, teaching her about what it truly means to be a director.

David Berberian (Scene Shop Supervisor) has spent over two decades in the world of theater and film. He is currently serving as the technical director for Duke University Venue and Production Management. David graduated with a BFA in Acting from East Carolina University. He has been seen on stage locally and has been in numerous corporate video projects, including training videos for IBM, Comcast, Cisco, Cree, and Glaxo-Smith Kline. David is a recurring role player, working with Credit Suisse during its summer training programs. He is a co-founder of RedBird Theater Company. David also enjoys his work with Theater Delta (TD) — an interactive theater model for social change that boasts such clients as The World Bank and the United States Army. With TD, David has had the privilege of traveling the country and working with a diverse group of clients on a range of social issues.

Tim Domack (Props Artisan) is super happy to be back at Duke again. His New York credits include: The Juilliard School props artisan and assistant for seven years, The Charlotte Wilcox Company and Shakespeare in the Park. Regional credits include: Goodspeed Opera House, Portland Opera, Utah Festival Opera, The North Carolina Theatre, Duke University, William Peace University and PNC Arena. Tim is currently the technical theater teacher at Wake Forest High School. He sends a special thank you and love to his family: Caroline, JJ, Phillip and Margaret.

Ally Doss (Colleen/Itchy) is a senior from New York City double majoring in Computer Science and Theater Studies. She is thrilled to be concluding her college acting career by portraying a character that is extremely, totally, 100% different than her in real life and also The Rat. She has previously acted in Theater Studies' *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*; Hoof 'n' Horn's *Island Time* (by Peter Vitale, Duke '86), *Little Shop of Horrors*, *A Chorus Line*, *Sundial* (by Sam Carpenter, Duke '24), *High School Musical*, and *9 to 5*; and Duke Players' *Sugar at Four in the Morning* (by Tess Redman, Duke '24) and *Marisol*. She also directed Hoof 'n' Horn's *Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet of 1812* and *Falsettos*, and designed lights for Hoof 'n' Horn's *In the*

Heights and Duke Players' *No Exit*. She would like to thank the *Mr. Burns* company for their incredible creativity and dedication, Jeff Storer and the entire Theater Studies faculty and staff for their endless faith and support, her Hoof 'n' Horn family for helping her find her purpose, and Aidan, Seneca and Alaina for being the best castmates, suitemates, and lifelong friends she could ever ask for.

Sonya Drum (Scenic Designer) is a theatrical designer, visual artist and arts educator. She has designed both scenery and costumes in the Triangle area for the past 22 years. Scenic design credits for Duke University Department of Theater Studies include: *Gulag Follies*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Perfect Detonator*, *Vinegar Tom*, *Not One Day*, *Bad Roads*, *As You Like It*, and *Fefu and Her Friends*. She also designed *In a Word* and *Orange Light* for Bulldog Ensemble Theater and *A Number* and *The Mountaintop* for Raleigh Little Theatre. Sonya is also a founding member of Bulldog Ensemble Theater.

Caroline Edmondson (Jenny) is a senior from Raleigh, NC double majoring in Theater Studies and Dance with a minor in Education. She previously appeared in Theater Studies' productions of *She Kills Monsters*, *Rent* and *Eurydice*. She directed Hoof 'n' Horn's *A Chorus Line* and Duke Players' *Dance Nation*, and will direct *In a Word* by Lauren Yee in the spring. Caroline is lucky to have the most supportive family ever. She is also grateful to the entire *Mr. Burns* team, especially Jeff (Storer), Jeff (Jones), and Dr. OJ for their wonderful mentorship over the course of her time at Duke.

Ethan Eldred (Sound Supervisor) is a composer and designer of sound and media for the stage. Eldred earned an MFA from the University of California San Diego and is a Lecturing Fellow in Theater Studies. Recent professional credits include Associate Sound/Media Design and Tour A/V supervision for La Jolla Playhouse's *Is It Thursday Yet?* (San Diego, CA), Video/Media Supervision for *Tornado Tastes Like Aluminum Sting* at Contemporary American Theater Festival (Shepherdstown, WV) and Sound and Projections Design for *Singin' in the Rain* at New Village Arts (Carlsbad, CA). More info at BardSound.com.

Larrabee Ellenberg (Stage Manager) is a sophomore from Columbia, SC double majoring in Neuroscience and Theater Studies. She has previously appeared in Theater Studies' production of *The Liar* (Geronte) as well as in Duke Players' recent production of *No Exit* (Valet), but this is her first time working behind the scenes at Duke. Larrabee would like to thank her infinitely supportive family and friends for continuing to love her despite her mildly insane schedule. She would also like to thank the entire cast and crew of *Mr. Burns* for their hard work, and to especially thank Thom Quintas and Jeff Storer for their wonderful mentorship during this process.

Alaina Guo (Maria) is a fossilized, geriatric, denture-wearing senior from Philly. One time, she mixed up B.F. Skinner (that one behaviorism freak) with Lemony Snicket (the author of *Series of Unfortunate Events*). Despite this, she is, in fact, majoring in Psychology and Theater Studies. She'd usually put something about being a Chemistry minor in her cast bio but she actually recently freed herself of those chains by dropping it #bless. She is the proud president (and stepdad) of Duke's most nefarious acapella group, Rhythm & Blue, and can be found relentlessly checking the exec group chat whenever she misses rehearsal. Her other two hobbies are coming up with uncouth nicknames for her friends and being an iPad kid. She would like to thank her family, friends and Duke Theater for providing her with endless support!

Hannah J. Haverkamp (Costume Shop Supervisor) is a Minnesota-born costume designer and freelance illustrator. She holds an MFA in Costume Design from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and has designed for theater, opera and independent film. She is currently a Lecturing Fellow in costume design and construction at Duke, and her research explores the construction of identity through connections between clothing, music and folklore.

Cooper Herrett (Matt) is a sophomore from Wilmington, NC currently deciding the best way to be indecisive with his studies. With the goal of ultimately attending medical school, he will most likely double major in Neuroscience and Public Policy and tag on a minor in Chinese. In his copious amounts of free time outside of rehearsal, he is involved in coordinating the annual TEDxDuke conference as well as Duke Student Government. He was last seen in the Duke Theater Studies production of *GOOD* (The Start-Up Bro) and Duke Players' *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Schultz). Outside of class (and rehearsals), he can be found swimming at the beach or relaxing on the boat. He would like to thank his parents for their continued support of all his endeavors as well as the cast and creative team for their unending kindness and laughs.

Derrick Ivey (Costume Designer) is a co-founder of RedBird Theater Company and has worked for over thirty years as actor, director, designer and producer in collaboration with theater companies throughout North Carolina. Recent regional designs include *What the Constitution Means to Me* with PlayMakers Repertory Company, *A Good Boy* with Hidden Voices, and *The Sound of Music* with Center Theater Company. Previous designs with Duke Theater Studies include *Ragtime*, *Bob*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, and *Vinegar Tom*.

Jeff A. R. Jones (Movement & Fight Director) has staged fights for over 200 shows in theater, opera and ballet. Highlights include *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Hookman*, *Beauty Queen of Leenane*, *Marian*, or *The True Tale of Robin Hood* and *The Rover* in

theater; *Cold Mountain*, *Carmen*, *Pagliacci* and *West Side Story* in opera; and *Don Quixote*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Nutcracker* and *Macbeth* in ballet. His fights have received rave reviews in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. He is recognized as a Fight Director, Certified Teacher and Theatrical Firearms Instructor by the Society of American Fight Directors. He is also a Certified Intimacy Director with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators. He is on faculty at Elon University and Meredith College.

Aidan Klein (Gibson) is a senior from Seattle, WA and an art fiend who enjoys collecting artistic experiences like knickknacks — he is currently involved in theater, puppetry, visual art, animation, music and game design. His major, an individualized degree program in Character Studies: Personality, Storytelling, and Embodiment, involves the study of personality through a psychosocial lens, its transcription onto visual and textual mediums to tell stories, and the translation of those stories into physical bodies, digital bodies and the self. After six past musicals with Hoof 'n' Horn, Aidan is excited to make his Theater Studies debut and first ever straight-ish play with *Mr. Burns*. Outside of theater, Aidan can be found playing saxophone in his band Solfish (music out on all streaming platforms!) or surreptitiously eating a Sazon quesadilla in WU. Cowabunga!

Bart Matthews (Composer/Music Director) has worked on a number of Durham and Duke theatrical productions (in a number of different capacities) since graduating from Duke in 1996 with a degree in Biology. At Manbites Dog Theater: *Back of the Throat*, *A Fistful of Love*, *God's Ear*, *Middletown, Oh*, *the Humanity*, *The Fairy Tale Lives of Russian Women*, *The Moors*, and *Mr. Burns*. At Duke: *The Tempest*, *Lorca's Child*, *The Laramie Project*, *Gulag Follies*, *Vanya on 42nd Street*, *Ragtime*, *As You Like It*, and *The Witches*. (Because he keeps this list in his head, he's certain there are shows he is forgetting at this point and he apologizes to them). In his day-job capacity, he is the sole owner/operator of Flow State Pilates Studio here in Durham. He also plays in two local bands: Sonder and The Host.

Skylar Noël (Assistant Stage Manager) is a sophomore from Pensacola, FL who is majoring in Biology with Theater Studies and Psychology minors. She has been doing theater for about 10 years, and she is passionate about both the acting and technical sides of theater. At Duke, Skylar has sound designed Hoof n' Horn's *In the Heights*, assistant stage-managed Duke Players' *Dance Nation*, and sound designed/board operated Duke Players' *No Exit*. She is so excited to ASM again and work on a Theater Studies show for the first time! She would like to thank the cast and crew of *Mr. Burns*, for both their dedication and for making the production process so wonderful.

Jules Odendahl-James (Dramaturg) serves as Duke Arts' director of engagement in addition to her work as an artist and educator. A co-founder of Durham's Bulldog Ensemble Theater and Theater Book Club: We Read. You Discuss, her artistic research areas include collaboration

between scientists and artists, documentary media/performance, and queer feminist theater. She serves as the chair of the Student Arts Awards faculty committee and the faculty advisor for the Duke Disability Alliance. Recent directing includes *John Proctor is the Villain* (Kenan Theater Company, UNC-CH) and *Humbug: A Seasonal Infestation* (Theater Book Club). This spring she will return to Kenan Theater Company to direct Jen Silverman's *Witch* (Feb. 26-Mar 2). She is an associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) and a member of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (LMDA).

Thom Quintas (Production Manager) has been Director of Theater for Duke Theater Studies since January 2020. Previously, he was the production manager and head of the stage management program at Indiana University Bloomington. Thom has worked in Los Angeles in film and event management for Disney, Universal, Warner Brothers and Panasonic. He has managed events at trade shows and conventions such as San Diego Comic-Con, CES, E3 and Penny Arcade. Thom has been a member of Actors Equity and IATSE. He earned an MFA in Production Management from the California Institute of the Arts and a BFA from Millikin University.

Sarah Roberts (Sound Designer) is a musician, composer and artist based in Chapel Hill, NC. She performs and records with her band, Pink Birds, Ladies Gun Club and as a solo artist. This is her fourth sound design at Duke University, and she is thrilled to be working with Jeff Storer and the whole team. She has also designed sound for theater productions at Gulfshore Playhouse, Childsplay, The Phoenix Theatre Company, Stray Cat Theatre, and Partners That Heal. Sarah has composed and scored the films *Window Chalk* (Ronomet Films) and *Dwell Time* (Citizen Skull Productions), which premiered at Cannes Film Festival 2014. Sarah has worked as an actor with HBO Films, BBC, San Jose Rep, Theatreworks, Arizona Theatre Company, The Phoenix Theatre Company, Alliance Theatre and Southwest Shakespeare. She received her BFA in Drama from Carnegie Mellon University. She currently lives in Chapel Hill with her husband, two kids, her bunny Gus, and enjoys creating beadwork jewelry for her online store, Flying Goat Studios.

Seneca Russell (Quincy) is a senior from Lake Wylie, SC majoring in Evolutionary Anthropology (Human Biology & Anatomy/ Paleoanthropology) and minoring in Theater Studies and Chemistry. She is so stoked to once again sing a little song and/or be a diva, as previously seen in *Falsettos* (Trina), *Legally Blonde* (Elle), *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Theresa), and everyday life — she's method, of course. This is her first Theater Studies show and she's so excited to do it with all her pookies. Outside of *Mr. Burns*, she is also involved with Hoof 'n' Horn, Duke Players, Duke Hospice, PhiDE, Lincoln Community Health Center, Root Causes and research on oral contraceptives and metabolism. She can usually be found playing with her cat/daughter, Mishka, and crashing

out over her MCAT prep. After graduation, she plans on taking a gap year to audition for professional shows (pls cast her) before applying to medical school.

Jadyn Schwartz (Ensemble/Bart) is a sophomore from Westchester, NY majoring in Theater Studies. She has previously stage managed the spring production of *The Liar*, as well as Duke Players' most recent production, *No Exit*. This is Jadyn's first time acting in a production at Duke and she couldn't be more excited! She would like to thank the whole cast and crew for being so amazing to work with these past months, and Jeff for being the best director and mentor she could ask for. She would also like to thank her family for always supporting her and for coming all the way to see it — so much love for you guys.

Britton Scott (Ensemble/Understudy) is a sophomore, and despite his family's best efforts to dissuade him, he plans to major in Theater Studies and later pursue a career in voice acting. As this is his first-ever Duke production, he graciously appreciates working alongside the lovely people who made this show happen. If you haven't gotten enough of him yet, you'll find comfort knowing he plans to be in another show in the spring, and may soon be writing/directing his own musical! All in all, this foray into acting at Duke has inspired him to continue on this path in the future. He wants to tell his family and friends hello but will unfortunately keep that opening sentence unchanged.

Jeffrey Storer (Director) is co-founder and artistic director of Manbites Dog Theater, a professional company founded in 1987 dedicated to world and regional premieres of contemporary work. He is co-author of *Indecent Materials*, which opened the 1990 season at Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival, and has co-authored *Tune for Tommy*, *Hotline* and an adaptation of Allan Gurganus's *Plays Well With Others*. He has directed over 150 full-length works since 1975 in New York City; Portland, Oregon; Boston; Winter Park, Florida; and Dallas. His directing credits include: the world premiere of Romulus Linney's *Silver River* (at Manbites Dog, Profile Theater in Portland and as the keynote event at the Sewanee Writer's Conference), *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* (Manbites), *She Kills Monsters*, *brownsville song (b-side for tray)*, *The Laramie Project*, *God's Ear*, *Spring Awakening*, *The Receptionist*, *Sonnets for an Old Century*, *Neighborhood 3*, *Reckless*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Bucknaked: A Love Story*, *The Normal Heart*, *The Day Room*, *Wild Honey*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *This Is Our Youth*, *Tomorrowland*, *Dark Ride*, *7 Blowjob*s, *Cloud Tectonics*, *The Illusion*, *The Darker Face of the Earth*, *Carousel*, *Cloud 9*, *Ragtime*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Angels in America* and co-authored and co-directed the stage and video versions of the world premiere of *Walking Miracles*. In March 1997, Manbites Dog purchased a 6,500-square-foot building on Foster Street near downtown Durham to serve as a permanent home space for the company. The building opened to the public in fall

1998, where it continued until 2018, when the building was sold and the company became a support organization for Triangle-area theater artists and companies. For the last seven years the Manbites Dog Theater Fund has made project grants, awards and institutional sustaining grants to area artists and companies. As a part of Duke's Department of Theater Studies, Jeff directed the workshop production of Jose Rivera's *References to Salvadore Dali Make Me Hot* and the world premiere of Romulus Linney's *Oscar Over Here*. He was Associate Director of Theater at Duke University from 1982-87 and Associate Professor of Theater at Rollins College from 1987-92. He returned to Duke in 1993. He chaired the Department of Theater Studies from 2007-09 and 2015-18. He is a full Professor of the Practice in the Department of Theater Studies. Jeff's first show directed in Sheaffer was *Uncommon Women and Others* in 1982.

Ryan Stretch (Ensemble/Nelson/Understudy) is a senior from San Francisco trying with every fiber of her being to complete both of her majors, Biology and Psychology. Will she get them done on time? There's no way of knowing. Ryan has spent years climbing the theater department ladder and is making her Mainstage debut after performing in a variety of Hoof 'n' Horn and Artist-in-Residence shows, playing roles from Silly Girl to Classmate #1. Tradition has held: she still does not have a given name in this show and resorted to making one up (it's Stella). When not partaking in her various creative pursuits, which include acapella and filmmaking, Ryan can be found communing with horses as part of the equestrian team or romanticizing the idea of dropping everything and moving abroad.

Miyuki Su (Scenic Artist) is a local scenic artist painting for theaters around the Triangle, including Raleigh Little Theatre, Theatre Raleigh, The Carolina Ballet and Duke Theater Studies. Previous credits with Duke Theater Studies include: *Vinegar Tom*, *Eurydice*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Golem*, *Medea*, *As You Like It*, *Bad Roads* and *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*.

Bill Webb (Technical Director and Light Designer) is a native of Alfred, NY. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Theater from Alfred University in 1988. He continued training at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, where he earned his Master of Fine Arts in Scenic Technology in 1994. In 1996, Bill joined the faculty at Elon University in North Carolina, where he served as the lighting designer/technical director/production manager for the Performing Arts Department. In addition to his production work at Elon, Bill has had an active career professionally. He has designed lights throughout the southeastern United States for companies such as Arkansas Repertory Theatre, Mill Mountain Theatre and the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. In addition to his lighting design career, Bill has worked throughout the United States for companies such as Cirque du Soleil, IWEISS and Bungalow Scenic Studios.

GET INVOLVED IN THEATER AT DUKE

The Department of Theater Studies welcomes all students to take a class or work on a show with us. Each semester, we present a Mainstage production directed by a faculty member, designed by professional theater artists, and built by Venue and Production Management staff and students. Auditions are open to all students, who can get academic credit for participating as cast or crew in two classes centered on the Mainstage experience. Many of our classes are open to students at any level of experience, and most of our performance classes — such as Musical Theater Workshop — also present their work publicly at the end of the semester.

We encourage and support student theater on campus in many ways. The department's student branch, Duke Players, produces student-directed events each semester, including staged readings and full productions of original student scripts, contemporary and classic plays, and musicals. Its executive board is always open to suggestions for new projects. Contact secretary Seneca Russell at seneca.russell@duke.edu.

Theater Studies supports Duke's other student theater groups, such as Hoof 'n' Horn, Duke Chinese Theater, Me Too Monologues and Duke Asian American Theater, by providing access to our costume and prop collections and with promotion and financial support.

If you have questions, email the Director of Theater for the department, Thom Quintas, at thomas.quintas@duke.edu.

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Nick Bria, *Senior Production Technician*

Paul Chapman, *Senior Production Technician*

Haze Grissett, *Senior Production Technician*

Trey Ledford, *Senior Production Technician*

Emma Sabulsky, *Senior Production Technician*

Christopher Scully-Thurston, *Senior Production Technician*

Scott Silver, *Senior Production Technician*

Reed Smith, *Senior Production Technician*

2025-26 SEASON

The Trio

February 12 to 14, 2026

Written and devised by Chelsea Thaler

Adapted from *Three Sisters* by Anton Chekov

Sheafer Lab Theater

Duke Players Playhouse Shorts

February 22, 2026

Brody Theater

Tilt/Shift

February 26 to 28, 2026

Work-in-progress by Torry Bend

Sheafer Lab Theater

In a Word

March 26 to 29, 2026

By Lauren Yee

A Senior Distinction Projection Directed by Caroline Edmondson

Duke Players Spring Show

Brody Theater

Six Characters in Search of an Author

April 3 to 5 and 9 to 12, 2026

By Luigi Pirandello

Adapted by Neal Bell

Directed by Jonathan Cullen

Sheafer Lab Theater



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