



SOUTHBANK
THEATRE COMPANY

PRESENTS



I Hate Hamlet

By Paul Rudnick



November 7-17 at Shelton Auditorium

Thursday-Saturday at 7:30; Sunday at 2:00

<https://butlerartscenter.org/performance/i-hate-hamlet/>





WITH SUPPORT FROM:







46
21

SEASON IV

Can great men be good men?

We're big readers at Southbank Theatre Company. Two recent books — *Of Boys and Men: Why the Modern Male Is Struggling, Why It Matters, and What to Do About It* by Richard Reeves (2022) and *For the Love of Men: A New Vision for Mindful Masculinity* by Liz Plank (2019) — inspired us to address toxic masculinity and how our culture's patriarchal system harms *all* genders. It has long been acknowledged that non-males are oppressed by patriarchy, but the ways that men have been harmed by it are often ignored. By considering the narrative of history's so-called "great" men, we aim to show how patriarchy betrays men and encourages toxic behavior. Our theme fits into the broader zeitgeist recently represented in films like *Oppenheimer*, *Barbie*, and *Maestro* — all of which show how patriarchy spurs toxic masculinity.

Join us for our next two shows at Shelton Auditorium!

Relativity by Mark St. Germain, February 27-March 9 — A play that pulls back the curtain on Albert Einstein's relationships and uncovers family secrets.

Red Velvet by Lolita Chakrabarti, April 24-May 4 — A play about the actor Ira Aldridge, who was the first Black actor to portray Othello on stage in the UK, roughly 220 years after Shakespeare wrote the play.

relativity

BY MARK ST. GERMAIN

February 27-March 9, 2025
at Shelton Auditorium

**RED
VELVET**

Lolita Chakrabarti

April 24-May 4, 2025
at Shelton Auditorium

᠑ Hate Hamlet

By Paul Rudnick



CAST

Andrew Rally

John Barrymore

Deirdre

Felicia

Lillian

Gary

J. Charles Weimer

Kevin Caraher

Michelle Wafford

Jean Arnold

Wendy Brown

Anthony Nathan

CREW

Director: Eric Bryant

Stage Manager: Scott Hall

Assistant Stage Manager and Board Operator: Nikki Sayer

Set Design: Ian Marshall-Fisher

Sound Design and Board Operator: Marcia Eppich-Harris

Lighting Design: Tim Dick

Costume Design: Karen Cones

Fight Choreography: Scott Russell

Intimacy Direction: Lola LaVacious

Choreography: Michelle Wafford

Butler Arts and Events Technical Director: Joey Wever

Production Photography: Rob Slaven of Indy Ghost Light Photography

Cover Design: 4621 Creative Solutions

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Thank you to Dance Kaleidoscope for our rehearsal space!



danceKALEIDOSCOPESM

Southbank Board of Directors: BJ Bruther (Secretary), Eric Bryant (Vice President), Carla Castaño, Marcia Eppich-Harris (President), Sara Galer, Aric Harris, Rod Macrae, Donna McFadden, Rob Slaven, Jonas Smith (Co-treasurer), and David Woll (co-treasurer).



can i touch it?

by francisca da silveira

can i touch it? takes an often-humorous look at the politics of the Black hair care industry while prompting a dialogue about the inequities that entrepreneurs face within a community on the verge of forced change.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

In his foreword to the play, *I Hate Hamlet*, Paul Rudnick wrote, “The play is, above all, a tribute to actors.” My old friend, *Merriam-Webster*, defines “tribute” as “something given or contributed voluntarily as due or deserved especially: a gift or service showing respect, gratitude, or affection.” Okay, so it also defines it as “an excessive tax, rental, or tariff imposed by a government, sovereign, lord, or landlord.” I admit that I don’t have insight into Mr. Rudnick’s views on taxes or tariffs, but I doubt that these were on his mind as he sat down in the Alchemist’s Corner, the name given to the apartment Mr. Rudnick was living in by its former tenant, the actor John Barrymore, to craft this magical tale of the glory of the theater.

I first became aware of *I Hate Hamlet* when I was living in New York in the 1990s. I happened to read an article about an actor who left a production mid-performance because his co-star swatted him in the ass with his sword during their onstage duel, a move that was not choreographed and that, as a choreographer of sword fights myself, I was shocked by. The story became, at the time, probably more famous than the show. Evan Handler, the actor who had walked off the stage, was both praised and vilified in the conversations that the acting community had while waiting for auditions, or sipping coffee, or hanging out at the local watering hole. Nicol Williamson, the famous Scottish actor, and member of the

“angry young men” movement in theater that included such luminaries as Richard Harris, Tom Courtenay, and Richard Burton, was the offending swatter. Very few people were praising him for his actions. Eventually the play closed, and as Mr. Rudnick notes in his *New Yorker* article “I Hit Hamlet” (December 16, 2007), on the day of the final performance, “the door to Nicol’s dressing room swung open. He stood there, a soused, lunatic, fifty-two-year-old Hamlet. We stared at each other. Nicol finally spoke, and his tone was both kind and accusing. He said, ‘You knew this was going to happen.’ And then he smiled and shut the door.”

I don’t know if this anecdote is true or if it is itself a thing of legend, based in reality but made larger than life through retelling. Isn’t the theater rife with such legends? Tales of misbehaving actors, demanding divas, and the various ghosts that haunt the dressing room hallways or appear in the wings to caution young actors who are not showing proper respect — tales of people like Booth, Bernhardt, and, of course, John Barrymore. Barrymore, the matinee idol who is said to have been the most famous Hamlet of his generation, who starred in films with Garbo, Harlow, Lombard and Colbert, but whose descent into alcoholism made him all but unemployable. Barrymore, whose corpse was, according to legend, “borrowed” from the morgue under the nose of a bribed caretaker, and propped up in a chair, drink in hand, in the home of Errol Flynn.

I Hate Hamlet is a love letter of sorts to those actors seeking to find their place in the world, who may have been drawn to the theater for the need to understand themselves and the human condition and to share that with an audience, but who also have to face the reality of paying the rent and eating. It is about the trend toward naturalism and realism contrasted with a more passionate, elevated art form that no longer speaks to modern audiences. In one exchange, Andrew Rally, the young television star who has been tapped to play Hamlet in Central Park, tells Barrymore, who is coaching him, “Oh – so you just want me to ham it up.” Barrymore responds, “I do not overact. I simply possess the emotional resources of ten men. I am not a ham; I am a crowd!” It is also a testament to the lyric, romantic qualities of Shakespeare and writers of his ilk. As Deirdre,

Andrew’s girlfriend, wonders, “...how do you know? If you’re really in ultimate love? If it’s...Shakespeare?”

Mostly, however, *I Hate Hamlet* is about the magic and glory of live theater. Yes, it is about the ghosts and legends and the tales actors tell each other in the wings or over a pint. But more so, it is about the alchemy that transforms the words of the playwright through the actor’s voice, body, and imagination, into the thrilling experience the audience beholds. It is about the intimate connection an actor makes with his or her audience, and how that connection is transcendent, ephemeral, and yes, sacred. Those who have experienced it forever chase it like a drug. It’s powerful stuff. As Barrymore says in the play, “A most potent aphrodisiac.”

~ Eric Bryant



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CAST AND CREW BIOS



J Charles Weimer (Andrew, he/him) Charlie is excited to have *I Hate Hamlet* as his first production with Southbank Theater Company. Recent credits this year include Paris in *Romeo and Juliet* at the Booth Tarkington Civic Theater, John Beckert in *M* with Catalyst Repertory, and the Earl of Kent in NCAC's production of *King Lear*. Charlie also works as a voice actor, most recently portraying the White Rabbit and Cheshire Cat in a radio play adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* with the Noblesville Preservation Alliance. He wishes to give all his love to his wife and family.



Kevin Caraher (Barrymore, he/him) *I Hate Hamlet* marks Kevin's second appearance with Southbank Theatre Company, having previously appeared in last season's *Man of La Mancha* as Pedro. Kevin is a regular with Bard Fest and played Duke Frederick/Senior last year in *As You Like It*. He also recently acted in Booth Tarkington Civic's production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* and with American Lives Theatre in *Small Mouth Sounds*. Favorite roles are Robert F. Kennedy in *RFK Remembered*, Bela Zangler in *Crazy For You*, and Bill W in *Bill W and Dr. Bob*. Directing credits include *Every Brilliant Thing* and *People Places & Things*; film credits include *Just The Truth* and

Noble Vision. Kevin is a Company member of the Indianapolis Shakespeare Company. Much love to Katy for all her love and support!



Michelle Wafford (Deirdre, Choreographer, she/her) is back for her third Southbank production in as many years, and she can't believe her luck when it comes to this cast and crew! She has been on Indy-area stages and screens since 1992. A few notable roles include Viola in the *Twelfth Night* musical (Southbank), Jean Louise Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Booth Tarkington Civic), Sylvia in *Sylvia* (Mud Creek Players), Juliet in *Romeo and Juliet* (First Folio Productions), and Elsa von Schraeder in *The Sound of Music* (RWTC). Many other projects to name as well! Thanks go to Eric, Gretel, and others near and far, for supporting this thing Michelle likes doing so much.



Jean Arnold (Felicia, she/her) has been captivated by theatre and dance her whole life. The lure of possibility in "The Empty Space" is strong! After some seriously serious roles, Jean is jazzed to turn up the comedic volume in this play. Thanks, Eric and Marcia! She has worked with the Fonseca Theatre Company, the Indianapolis Phoenix Theatre CC, IndyFringe, Betty Rage Productions, Bard Fest, and Indiana Repertory Theatre. Recent roles include Eleanor of Aquitaine in *The Lion In Winter* (Southbank) and Victoria Hastings in *Live at the Purple Lounge* (Betty Rage). She loves to travel for work and life and recently visited Sweden with one of her four amazing kids. Off-

stage she lives on her yoga mat, or bike, in a kayak or you can see her out with her dear Dad, Victor. Thanks, Richard, for making this and all things possible.

Facility Information

TICKETS

Tickets are available in advance at the Clowes Memorial Hall Box Office Wednesday-Friday 10:00 AM-4:00 PM. The Shelton Auditorium Box Office will open two hours prior to curtain for will call and day of show sales.

For information only call the Clowes Box Office Monday-Friday 10am-4pm: 317-940-6444 800-732-0804

Everyone needs a ticket no matter the age, including babes in arms.

PARKING AND TRAFFIC

Visit www.butler.edu/campus-services/parking/ for the most up-to-date information.

SERVICES

Concessions

Beverages and confections are sold at the bar.

Information

For information contact the nearest usher.

Restrooms

Down the hall to the left of the entrance

All are wheelchair accessible.

ACCESSIBILITY

Upon arrival, contact an usher to be directed to the accessible seating.

The following services are available by calling 317-940-9697 10 days prior to the performance.

- ASL Interpreters
- Audio Description
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PATRON SERVICES

Lost and Found

Items will be turned into the Information Desk at Clowes Memorial Hall after performances or the following business day. Contact the Clowes Information Line at 317-940-6444 - 800-732-0804 between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM.

Medical Assistance

An EMT is on duty at most events. Contact an usher if you need assistance.

Police & Vehicle Emergency

Contact the nearest usher in case of emergency. Butler University Police will assist with vehicle access and emergency starts.

POLICY

Electronic Devices

The taking of photographs, the use of recording devices, and the use of texting devices are strictly prohibited in the auditorium.

Please deactivate electronic watch alarms, cellular phones, texting devices, and pagers.

Emergency Evacuation

Exits are conveniently located throughout the theater. Note your closest exit may be behind you. In the event of an emergency, please do not run. Walk slowly and listen for additional instructions.

Large Bags

Butler Arts & Events Center reserves the right to inspect and limit the size of bags allowed in the auditorium. If your bag exceeds 12" you may be asked to leave it at the front desk.

Late Arrival Policy

Late arrivals will be seated at appropriate intervals. Please be considerate of fellow audience members.

Smoking

Shelton Auditorium is a smoke-free facility.

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CAST AND CREW BIOS



Anthony Nathan (Gary, he/him) has over 20 years in theatre. He's delighted to complete his sixth Southbank production — *Seeking Nietzsche* (Fredrick Nietzsche), *Shit Cake* (Aaron), *Man of La Mancha* (Sancho), *Troilus and Cressida the Musical* (Thersites) and director of *Didn't See That Coming*. Previous collaborations include other Indianapolis groups: Catalyst (*Gallery Trilogy*), LAFF (*Puffs*) Wisdom Tooth (*Bad Seed*), Bard Fest (*Elizabeth Rex*), Defiance Comedy (*Jesus Is My Roomie*), Khaos (*Yellow Heat: Vincent Van Gogh in Arles*), IndyFringe Festival (*Cookie Dough Show*). Anthony graduated Berea College and performed in Scotland and Greece. Thank you family and

friends and especially my darling Nico.



Wendy Brown (Lillian, she/her) reentered theatre following 38 years in the thoroughbred industry. She's enjoyed roles with Indianapolis Civic Theatre, Epilogue Theatre, Westfield Play House, Hendricks Civic Theatre, Center Stage, Buck Creek Players, Theatre Unchained, Catalyst, IndyFringe, Diva Fest, American Lives Theatre, Carmel Community Players, and Clerical Error Productions. She serves on the board of Friends of Ferdinand, a thoroughbred aftercare organization, and tends two retired horses. She loves losing herself through the lens of her camera. This show is her Southbank premier, the closest she has come to "doing" Shakespeare. 'Lillian' is an old girl near and dear to

her heart....long live romance. Wendy has found much joy working with this talented cast and crew. Thanks to all of them and to you our audience.

Crew

Eric Bryant (he/him, Director) This is Eric's third time directing for Southbank. In 2022 he directed *Natural Shocks* by Lauren Gunderson, and in 2023 he directed "That Moment When" by Steve Martin, Southbank's entry for TA DAH! (Theatre and Drag Alliance Hootenanny), which he also produced. Most recently, Eric appeared in Southbank's production of *Shit Cake* by Marcia Eppich-Harris, part of the 2024 IndyFringe Festival. Other recent favorite roles include Barrymore in *I Hate Hamlet* (Carmel Community Players), Claudius in *Hamlet* (Indy BardFest), and Will Shakespeare in *Elizabeth Rex* (Indy BardFest). He was nominated for Outstanding Supporting Performer in the 2023 BroadwayWorld Indianapolis Awards for his performance as TJ in James Ijame's *TJ Loves Sally 4Ever* (Fonseca Theatre). Eric directed *True West* by Sam Shepard for CCP in 2023, and is slated to co-direct *Wit* by Margaret Edson in the Spring of 2025. He will be seen on stage next in *The Humans* by Stephen Karam, produced by American Lives Theatre. Eric teaches technique and scene work classes for adult actors at Storefront Theatre of Indianapolis. He is also a member of the 2024-2026 Meisner Technique class cohort at the Phoenix Theatre and Cultural Center.

Scott Hall (he/him, Stage Manager) has been summoned back to Southbank Theatre using a broken Ouija board and an offering of stale store-bought chocolate chip cookies. The role of Stage Manager requires a person of such unique abilities that very few are capable of handling this demanding role. Unfortunately all of those people were unavailable, so you know, here we are. A recent transplant from the west coast, Scott is

CAST AND CREW BIOS

looking forward to making his mark upon the Indy theatre scene, which should be easy to buff out using some baking soda and Dawn dish detergent. He is also on the search for a local taqueria that makes a damn good mission-style burrito, so any suggestions will be gratefully appreciated. Scott recently appeared in Southbank's production of *Man of La Mancha*, playing the Innkeeper.

Nikki Sayer (she/her, Assistant Stage Manager) has been Stage Managing around Indianapolis for 10 years. Most recently she assisted with *Shit Cake* and *Seeking Nietzsche* with Southbank and *Nerdgasm* with Angel Burlesque at Gen Con. This is her sixth show with Southbank, and she thanks Marcia for continuing to trust her. Nikki has worked with Indiana Performing Arts Initiative, Q Artistry, Catalyst Repertory, Angel Burlesque and the former Theatre on the Square. She is a burlesque performer and producer. She wants to thank her husband and daughter for their love and support.

Ian Marshall-Fisher (Set Design, he/him) has designed for various theatres around the Indianapolis area. Recent Scenic Designs include *Lost in Yonkers*, *The Spitfire Grill*, *Night Must Fall*, and *Of Mice and Men* with Mainstreet Productions, *The Lilies of the Field* and *Drinking Habits* with the Belfry Theatre, and *The Dinner Party* and *True West* with Carmel Community Players. Outside of theatre, Ian works as a Regional Director of Human Resources for a prominent hotel company. In his free time he enjoys playing Pokémon with his nieces, spending time with family, traveling to new places with his husband, DéJon, and decorating their house!

Marcia Eppich-Harris (she/her, Sound Design) is the artistic director and founder of Southbank Theatre Company. She holds a PhD in Shakespeare and Dramatic

Literature and taught at the college level for over 15 years. She is a playwright, lyricist, composer, director, sound designer, and producer. Marcia's writing includes plays, musicals (composer/lyricist), fiction, poetry, scholarship, and reviews. Her most recent productions include a variety of ten minute plays and performances of her full-length plays *Seneca and the Soul of Nero*, *The Profession*, her musical adaptation of Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, for which she wrote the music and lyrics, *Shit Cake*, and *Seeking Nietzsche*. Her plays *The Profession* and *Seneca and the Soul of Nero* have been published by Next Stage Press.

Tim Dick (Lighting Design, they/them) is a lighting designer, technician, and educator based out of Indianapolis. They are excited for their first time working with Southbank. After graduating from Indiana State University in 2016, they worked and designed in the San Francisco Bay Area of California as well as Long Island, New York. Recent credits include American Lives Theatre's *What the Constitution Means to Me*, *A Case for the Existence of God*, and *The Minutes*; NAATC's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *Judy's Life's Work*; ISU's *Sensitive Guys*; and many more.

Karen Cones (Costume Design and props, she/her) was born into Indy community theatre at Footlite Musicals. She's done over 150 theatrical productions in a variety of capacities. Karen is an actor, singer, dancer, choreographer, stage manager, properties master, scenic artist, musician, and costumer. She is enjoying her retirement after 33 years of Federal service by managing costumes for Southbank Theatre Company, Main Street Productions, Lawrence North High School, and Brownsburg High School. She is also the Box Office Manager at the Basile Westfield Playhouse.



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Scott Russell (Fight Choreography, he/him) is an AEA actor, SDC Fight Director, and a Full Instructor with Dueling Arts International; he currently teaches theatre at Franklin College. He holds advanced recognition with DAI, the Society of American Fight Directors, Fight Directors Canada, the Society of Australian Fight Directors, Inc., the Nordic Stage Fight Society, and the British Academy of Stage and Screen Combat. Scott received his MFA from the University of Arkansas, and is a graduate of The Conservatory at Act One Studios – Chicago; and holds his undergraduate degree from Belmont University.

Lola LaVacious (Intimacy Direction, she/her) is a vibrant and versatile creative force in Indianapolis, shining as a performer, singer, show and arts event director, and intimacy director. Her work has been a part of productions like *The Lion in*

Winter, Man of La Mancha, Macbeth, and the current production of *I Hate Hamlet*. When she's not on stage, you'll find her making guest appearances at art and variety shows, crafting fresh stand-up comedy, and happily sipping all the coffee that fuels her many passions.

Thank you for joining us for *I Hate Hamlet*! Please let us know how you liked the show! Fill out our brief survey for the chance to win two tickets to our next show, *Relativity*!





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