9-18-2014

Wit
TAYLOR UNIVERSITY'S
Mitchell Theatre
PRESENTS

TAYLOR THEATRE PRESENTS
THE PULITZER PRIZE WINNING PLAY
BY MARGARET EDSON

W;T

“And death shall be no more, death thou shalt die.”

September 18, 19, 20th @ 8pm
September 21st @ 2pm
I first encountered the poetry of John Donne in my Seventeenth-Century English Literature course at Nyack College, taught by a man who became my mentor, Dr. William Fry. I now sit in the office and at the desk where he spent the last twenty years of his career teaching at Taylor. There’s a moral in that, but we’ll save it for another day.

Donne’s poetry overpowered me, which, I take it, is the effect he was after. Most other poetry, especially contemporary poetry, has struck me as rather tame and watery ever since. Pretty birdies, dogs, flowers, and very slow observations of grass growing very slowly. I exaggerate. Something Donne did to the point of absurdity.

What I suppose I liked best about Donne was his rather cocky resistance to simple truths and simple minds. Poets, he was told, had to invoke the gods and compare love to a rose. Why not argue with the divinity and compare love to a compass? Or a flea? “Batter my heart, three-personed God,” he demands (“asks” is too weak a term for the Donne imperative). He didn’t write “inspirational” verse, even when he dealt with the most ultimate metaphysical issues we rational animals face. Anything and everything was subject to his ironic scrutiny and radical reworking.

Yet, beneath or better wound up with all that intellectual energy, there was a passion for truth. Real truth. Not just the same old answers unexamined. Nowhere is this better expressed than in his “Hymn to God the Father,” in which he wonders whether God’s forgiveness can really be given to him considering all his many sins of intention and omission. “When thou hast done, thou hast not done [Donne], for I have more.” Beyond this, Donne’s passionate intellect seems always to be reaching towards and longing for a great love that he sometimes cannot believe in.

Vivian Bearing, the protagonist of WIT, also loves Donne’s poetry. She loves it for the intellectual challenge and the opportunity to prove herself as a scholar of the toughest poetry in canon. But somewhere and somehow she missed the bit about truth and love. She’s a good scholar. Very very good. As she says, “I can say with confidence, no one is quite as good as I.” Yet so was her teacher and mentor, E. M. Ashford (modeled on the famous Donne scholar, Helen Gardner). Early in the play, Professor Ashford, discussing Donne’s famous sonnet “Death be not proud,” insists, “It is not wit, Miss Bearing, it is truth.” We are never told exactly why Vivian doesn’t get that, but clearly she does not. In a television melodrama, her flaw would, undoubtedly, be attributed to an alcoholic father or middle school bully. In WIT, she just doesn’t get
it. Perhaps because that’s what really happens. Our protagonist is not really very nice.

Late in the play, however, far along in the late stages of her cancer and her memories of a life lived not excellently, Vivian seems to understand. She says to her nurse, who has become her friend (maybe her first one), “I’m a teacher.” This point is driven home when her mentor, now 80 years old, visits her former student in the hospital, showing herself to be just as comfortable with human kindness, children’s books, and even snuggling in bed as she is with Renaissance punctuation.

The bell has tolled for my mentor, Dr. Fry. And for Helen Gardner. For my brother Noel, whom I was going out to visit in the hospital just about a year ago now (I didn’t read to him, but I did play my ukulele). For Jason Francis, whom we remember with this scholarship show. For our beloved Ollie Hubbard. And for so many who have meant so much to each of us here tonight. Thanks to Margaret Edson (the author) and the cast and crew of WIT, we have a remarkable, moving, funny, revealing, transformational work of art to help us remember, feel, think, and be better.

~Joe Ricke

We dedicate this production to
those who have fought the fight against cancer,
those who are currently in the battle,
and to the friends and family who have stood beside them.

THE STAGE MANAGER AND ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR

Claire Hadley, a Senior Theatre Major, loves the production side of shows. She has participated in many on Taylor stage, including A Christmas Carol, Romeo and Juliet, Freud’s Last Session, Godspell, The Cherry Orchard, and The Miracle Worker. This is the third Jason Francis Memorial Scholarship show that Claire has worked on, and she enjoys learning new things about herself and theatre each time. This show has been especially impactful to Claire, as she lost her grandmother to cancer two years ago. Claire would like to thank her family, her best friend Emily and her mentor Kristen, who encourage her to put God first in every show she does.
**The Designers**

**Terrance Volden - Technical Director and Scenic Designer**
Terrance graduated from Sterling College in Kansas in 2008 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication and Theatre Arts. After graduation, he spent just under 3 years as a missionary outside of Chiclayo, Peru working for a child sponsorship organization as a teacher, pastor, and translator. In 2012, he obtained his education licenses in both Theatre and Vocal Music, also from Sterling. His theatre credits include three years as Scene Shop Supervisor at Sterling College and freelance scene design and construction across Kansas and Oklahoma. This is Terrance’s third year serving as Technical Director for the Taylor Theatre Department. His past work at Taylor includes scene designs for *Waiting for Godot*, *Freud’s Last Session*, and *The Cherry Orchard* along with directing *The Servant of Two Masters*.

**Kevin Gawley - Lighting Designer**
Kevin is returning to design his 25th production at Taylor. As a freelance lighting/scenic designer, Kevin’s work has appeared on many Chicago stages, including Lifeline Theatre where he won the Jeff Citation for his design of *Jane Eyre*, the After Dark Award for his design of *Strong Poison*, and has been an ensemble member and resident designer since 2001. His work also appeared in numerous productions at the Bailiwick, Organic, Porchlight, OperaModa, Blindfaith, Theatre on the Lake, Metropolis, StoreFront, Loyola University Chicago, Revels Chicago, Midwest Jewish, and at the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival theatres. Kevin is currently the Lighting and Scenic Design professor at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire and has previously taught courses at Loyola University Chicago and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is also a resident designer at St. Scholastica Academy. Kevin holds an MFA and BFA in Lighting Design from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and an MBA in Finance from DePaul University. Kevin’s lighting/projection designs were featured summer 2009 at Lifeline Theatre’s productions of *Crossing California* and *Gaudy Night*. 
THE JASON FRANCIS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

In 2010 Taylor University and the Theatre department lost one of its most beloved and talented graduates, Jason Francis. In his honor a scholarship fund has been initiated which will be awarded to an incoming student majoring in theatre. Currently, there are no theatre scholarships available to new majors. Linda, Jason’s wife, described the initiative this way:

I would like to let you know one special way we can all remember and honor Jason. Jason LOVED Taylor and one of his dreams was to get his MFA and return there as a professor of Theatre. His own professor, Ollie Hubbard, passed away several years ago and it inspired us to make the move to Nebraska and start working on his dream. The dream will not be fulfilled in the way we all hoped but we are setting up a scholarship in his name.

We need to raise $20,000 and the interest off that will be given as a scholarship every year to one promising and eligible theatre student. In this way, Jason will still be supporting young artists in his favorite field year after year.

Will you consider partnering with us in raising the $20,000 needed to fund this scholarship? If you would like to be a part of creating this memorial to one outstanding student, and in the process make it possible for other students to grow through the experience of a Taylor theatre education, you can make a tax deductible contribution in any amount. Simply make your check payable to Taylor University and note “Jason Francis Memorial Scholarship” on the memo line.

TAYLOR THEATRE 2014-2015

Tartuffe
November 14-16, 21-23

A Piece of My Heart
February 20-22, 27-March 1

I Love a Piano
April 24-26, May 1-3
WIT

Vivian Bearing...........................................*Tracy Manning
Dr. Kelekian..............................................Matt DeLong
E.M. Ashford...........................................Patricia Robertson
Jason Posner...........................................*Ryan Maloney
Susie Monahan........................................Hannah Adderley
Mr. Bearing.............................................Dan Blosser
Students/Medical Staff...............................*Sara Bailey
                                              Conner Reagan
                                              *Tamara Peachy
                                              Mirae Kim
                                              Evan Koons

SETTING
Late 1990s in a University Hospital
Comprehensive Cancer Center
and Vivian Bearing’s memory

Fog will be used in this production.

*Denotes Alpha Psi Omega Membership
National Theatre Honor Society
The Cast

*Tracy Manning
Tracy is in her tenth year at Taylor as the Director of Theatre. This is her third year as full time faculty in the Communication Department. As an actor she appeared in Doubt, The Rainmaker, Fools and A Midsummer Night’s Dream, among others. “Special thanks to my husband and children who make who I am and what I do possible. Love you more than life...To my daddy and momma who allowed me to study this passion God put in me and trusted Him to take care of all my needs. To God the Father, Son & Holy Spirit who once formed the world, incarnated Himself into it, and empowers me daily; who continues to gift and empower his people to continue incarnating the word so that we might, through the power of theatre, view ourselves and the world honestly, with compassion & great hope.”

Matt DeLong
Matt is a Professor of Mathematics and Fellow of the Bedi Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence at Taylor University. He also co-teaches the Foundations of the Christian Liberal Arts course. Matt previously appeared on the Taylor stage as CS Lewis in Freud’s Last Session and as Mr. Fezziwig in A Christmas Carol. Other favorite roles include Max in Lend Me a Tenor, Tateh in Ragtime, John the Baptist/Judas in Godspell, Sancho in Man of la Mancha and Herman in The Most Happy Fella. He loves spending time with his beautiful wife and three wonderful kids, all of whom also love to perform on the stage. He dedicates his performance to his “Grandpa Louie,” who died of cancer while Matt was in college.

Patricia Robertson
Patricia is a Professor of Music at Taylor University where she teaches applied voice studies and music history. She also served as music director for the opera and music theater programs at Taylor since 2002. Her credits include last year’s productions of Kiss me Kate and Dido and Aeneas. She has appeared as “Mum” in Benjamin Britten’s opera Albert Herring, and “Iris” in The Gondoliers, with the Bose Lyric Theatre, Anderson University; as well as roles in A Little Night Music, Nunsense, Side by Side by Sondheim, Bye, Bye, Birdie, Hello Dolly!, Fiddler on the Roof, and 1776 with The Ball State Summer Theatre Festival, a semi-professional repertory company funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Patricia lives in Upland with her husband Fritz and her dog, Maggie.

*Ryan Maloney
Ryan is delighted to be returning to the Mitchell stage for Wit. During his time at Taylor he was involved in several productions, most notably, Romeo & Juliet, Noises Off, Waiting for Godot, The Glass Menagerie, All My Sons, and Incident at Vichy. He holds a BA in Art and hopes to pursue an MFA in Acting in the near future. “From the bottom of my heart, thank you Joe for another exceptional challenge, Tracy for always pointing towards the greater potential, and Mom & Dad for the ceaseless belief in and support of.”
Hannah Adderley

Hannah is in her second year as a graduate student in the MAHE program at Taylor. Her hometown is Portland, Oregon. She has appeared in shows including It’s a Wonderful Life, Steel Magnolias, and Taming of the Shrew. After graduating and working for a couple of years, Hannah hopes to pursue a PhD in Learning Support Services or Higher Education Administration, while continuing to dabble in theatre. She would like to thank Dr. Ricke for taking a chance on a stranger, the cast and crew for being truly welcoming, to Pam Harrison and Dr. Steve Phillips “for their able assistance,” and to her mother and grandmother for deeper meaning.

Dan Blosser

Originally from Goshen, Indiana, Dan is the Pastor of Adult Ministries at Upland Community Church. His first career was in nursing. He spent 9 years as a staff nurse and 2 years as a clinical supervisor in the Operating Room. This play, his first, is especially significant to Dan because of his dual interests in medicine and theology. Dan gives thanks to “Jesus, the Great Physician who never botches our care—whose humility redeems our arrogance; the Author of life who is victor over death. For my family, who happily made this a priority. And for Trena, my friend, an awesome nurse, who died of advanced ovarian cancer 9/9/14 (age 54).”

Sara Bailey

Sara is an ’09 Taylor alum currently working as the Director of Distribution at Tree of Life Bookstores in Marion. While at Taylor she appeared in The Odd Couple and The Crucible, as well as The Boys Next Door at Marion Civic. She was the Costume Designer for several productions at Taylor including The Cherry Orchard, The Curious Savage and The Count of Monte Cristo. In her spare time she is a freelance costume designer, currently working on Grace Community Church’s production of Les Mis. She would like to thank Tracy for always believing, Terrance for always encouraging, and the Fab Five for everything else.

Conner Reagan

Indianapolis, Indiana is home to sophomore Mathematics major Conner Reagan. He says he is next in line of the many 2013 Freshman Irish Studies Program students to make an appearance onstage in Taylor Theatre. Conner would like to thank Mark Vanest, Nanci Slagle, and Morgan Turner for their suggestion and inspiration to participate in theatre.
Evan Koons
Evan is a junior Secondary Music Education major from Cleves, Ohio. He desires to be a high school chorale teacher. He last appeared in *Kiss Me, Kate* as Freddy Graham at Taylor and in high school as Dr. Jekyll in *Jekyll and Hyde* and as Reverend Moore in *Footloose*. Evan is a member of the Taylor Opera, Taylor Sounds and Taylor Chorale. “Special thanks go to Michael and Cynthia Koons for their love and encouragement, Mallory Hornsby for introducing me to the world of theatre, Briana Redden for her never-ending support, as well as Joe and the entire Theatre family for welcoming me back onto the stage.”

Mirae Kim
Mirae is an exchange student from Hallym University in South Korea. Her home is in the Republic of Korea. This is her final semester at Taylor. Mirae would like to thank God, her parents, Dr. Ricke, her fellow cast members, and her friends including her boyfriend.

*SPECIAL THANKS*

*Assistance and Donations to the Set*

Pam Harrison
Dr. Albert Harrison
Dr. Steve Phillips
John O’Connell, Dean of Visual and Performing Arts at IPFW - interview on Arts Weekly
Jones-Smith Funeral Home
IWU School of Nursing
University Nursing Center
Jerry Stair
THE PRODUCTION STAFF

Artistic Director................................................................. Joe Ricke

Technical Director and Scenic Designer...............................*Terrance Volden

Lighting Designer............................................................... Kevin Gawley

Stage Manager/Assistant to the Director...............................Claire Hadley

Assistant Stage Manager....................................................Erin Gautille

Master Carpenter............................................................... Erin Gautille

Charge Scenic Artist.........................................................Megan McKechnie

Properties Master.............................................................*Kacey Heinlein

Costume Designer............................................................Natalie Smiley

Makeup/Hair........................................................................*Leah Murphy

Sound Technician..............................................................Nathan Pavey

Assistant Sound Technician................................................Daniel Maurer

Master Electrician.............................................................Wes Morgan

Nate Aeilts
Alec Ellsworth
Ashley McGhee

*Tyler Smith
Mark Glenchur
Rae Beasley
Becca Robb

Marketing..............................................................................Andrew Davis

Photographer........................................................................Callie Haven

Box Office Assistant........................................................Jayne Reinhiller

Marshall Oppel
Heidi Lundquist
Chasly Sheppard
Ellie Vandezgriff

Head Usher...........................................................................Grace Bolinger

Ushers.................................................................Ruth Jansen
Matthew Parks
Grace Foltz
Laura Liechty
Jessica Schulte
Alisa Schaefer

Rachel Kienzle
Bekah Swank
David Seaman
Michael Monroe
Sarah Davis
Amber DeArruda

Chin Ai Oh
Hannah Rathbun
*Tyler Smith
Sean Seel
Sarah Davis
Gwen Agness

Hayley King
Sarah Glett
Kelli Jean Collins
Ashley Burkett
Sarah Collins
Sam Petersen

*Denotes Alpha Psi Omega Membership
National Theatre Honor Society
Early diagnosis is the key to survival, and the key to early diagnosis is recognizing the symptoms of ovarian cancer:

- Bloating
- Pelvic or abdominal pain
- Trouble eating or feeling full quickly
- Urgency or frequency of urination

The Pap Test does not test for ovarian cancer. In fact, there is NO screening test for the disease. Talk to your doctor if you, or someone you love, experience any of these symptoms for longer than two weeks.

EARLY DETECTION SAVES LIVES
LEARN MORE AT
OVARIAN.ORG OR 1.888.OVARIAN
Welcome to Taylor University Theatre. If you are a regular supporter of our program we thank you for your encouraging participation over the years. If this is your first visit, we trust that you will enjoy our work enough to return - again and again and again. We have a distinct calling as a Christian liberal arts theatre program, reflected in our philosophical statement. We welcome your participation, your comments on our work, and any suggestions you might have to help us accomplish our mission.

Come Play with us...

Taylor University Theatre is a co-curricular educational program supporting the liberal arts mission of the University by providing a broad range of theatre experiences that span most theatrical periods, genres, and styles.

Plays that probe the human condition and reveal human action with integrity, authenticity, and a sense of “grace,” provide us the opportunity to understand better what is true about ourselves and others.

While individual plays may not necessarily reflect the ethos of the Taylor community, we believe that this theatrical pursuit of truth resides at the heart of a Christian Liberal Arts education.