
Much Ado About Nothing
April 19-28
Boxland Media
endeavor theatre

DIRECTOR'S NOTE-

In December 2022, as part of the Wild Goose Community Arts Incubator, I produced an abridged version of the show you are going to see tonight. We took all 5 acts, condensed it down to 5 characters, 20 minutes, and produced one of the most exciting theatrical experiences I have ever had. In April of 2023, I was lucky enough to receive an Individual Artist grant from the Greater Columbus Arts Council. When given the opportunity to produce a full-length project and formally establish a theatre company, I knew the first show had to be the full-length version of our originally abridged *Much Ado About Nothing.*

Twelve years ago, I was assigned two pieces from *Much Ado* for an acting class and I haven't stopped talking about this show since. It's our original 'Enemies to Lovers' story, the comedy in this show forms the backbone of contemporary comedy, and it's filled with an immense amount of heart. All of that is to say, the show isn't perfect. There is a troubling amount of misogyny present and many of the female characters in the show are left with essentially no agency. If you're not familiar with the show, I'm sure you're thinking "Man, I picked an exciting night out at the theatre." Stay with me! I promise you're in for a good time.

The central tenet of my directing style is intentionally casting a play so that the world onstage reflects the world around us. Given the opportunity to subvert expectations, I'm going to do so, aiming always to center historically excluded voices. So, the production you're seeing tonight is *Much Ado About Nothing*, but told through a queer lens. Beatrice and Benedick have both been cast as women. The bar you see before you, Messina, was opened by our young, female bar owner, Leonato as a safe space for her friends and chosen family. We've worked arduously to ensure all characters have a voice and agency in all their decisions.

Every day, politicians are actively working to strip the rights of LGBTQIA+ people, despite a general facade of “Things are better than they ever have been.” So, when I was modernizing the production, knowing that I was centering queer voices, it felt obvious to have the “military characters” be politicians and old friends of Leonato, coming to Messina for a much needed rest after a long journey on the campaign trail. No matter how strong their allyship might seem or how good their promises might look, the second one of them is slighted, they fall back on deeply entrenched misogynistic tendencies. My goal with this process was to highlight a group of people, that, despite all of this, persevered and faced an uncertain future joyfully.

I couldn’t be more thankful for the group of artists who worked on this show. This being Endeavor’s first show was a huge risk. I had no idea if people were going to respond to an entirely modern take on Shakespeare. This is not a production for the Shakespeare purist. The language is exactly the same. But, every other element is completely modernized. The artists who jumped into this concept headfirst built this world with love, compassion, and a desire to celebrate queer love and joy. I have no doubt that you will feel the heart of this production as soon as the first line is spoken.

Thank you for supporting live theatre. Thank you for supporting a brand new company. And, thank you for supporting innovative, intentional, and joyous work.

Here’s to many more years of Endeavor Theatre!

- Corey Ragan

Cast Members



Colleen Underwood

Beatrice

Colleen is thrilled beyond words to not only be performing her dream role of Beatrice, but to be bringing this production to life with such an incredible group of people. Colleen has been a part of the Columbus theater scene for some time now, participating on and off stage. Most recently, she appeared in ATC's production of Sense and Sensibility as Elinor, and LTOB's Murder Inn as Carolyn. The only other thing interesting about Colleen (outside of theater), would be that she spends her free time out at the barn with her horse, Ted, who she frequently makes an unwilling scene partner to run lines with. She is so grateful to her family for putting up with her silly schedule and celebrating these roles with her. And more than anything, she is so so so thankful to Corey Ragan and Endeavor for bringing this cast and crew together for a truly one-of-a-kind experience!

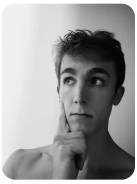


Dana Bauman

Benedick

Dana Bauman is over the moon to have you here for the beautiful queer magic that is this show. As President of the Endeavor Theatre Board, she would also like to thank you for the money. You may have seen Dana in various performances around Columbus from her Jebby-nominated Twinkie eating as Jan in Grease and Ouija board expertise as Muriel in Murder Inn (Little Theatre Off Broadway), to her critically-lauded condiment wielding as Casey in Graveyard Shift (Madlab); with your generous contributions, she hopes you'll see many more food-related stunts from her here in the future! Dana would like to thank Corey & Sarina for being the most supportive, empathetic, and fun people to run a nonprofit theatre company with. She would also like to thank Mom & Dad, Josh, Me(a)gan, The Chicken Salad Chicks, Katie & Dr. Sammyshanks, as well as the entire incredible cast you are about to see tonight for their support and for constantly reminding her she doesn't suck.

Copyright @2021 On The Stage. All marks used by permission



Mitch Worden

Claudio

Mitch Worden (Claudio) is thrilled to be a part of Endeavor's first staged show alongside so many talented artists! He was most recently seen over the summer in ATC's production of Love's Labour's Lost (Lord Longaville) and has prior experience in the Cincinnati community theater scene, being a part of productions such as Sunset Player's Sherwood: The Adventures of Robin Hood (Prince John/King Richard) and The Drama Workshop's The Philadelphia Story (Sandy). Mitch would like to thank his Columbus fam and fellow D&D adventurers--Ashley, Autumn, Aspen, Missy & Andy--for their unwavering support, his mom and dad for their consistent love, his awesome cast members & crew, and his director, Corey, for always pushing him to bring his best performance possible to the stage. Above all else, Mitch hopes you enjoy the show and its wonderful re-imaging of an iconic enemies-to-lovers romp!



Sarina Hyland

Hero

Sarina is so excited to be part of Much Ado! Some favorite past credits include Cabaret (Sally Bowles), Young Frankenstein (Inga), Ride the Cyclone (Jane Doe), and Grease (Doody). She studied at Ohio State University where she received a BA in theatre. She currently serves as the Vice President of the board for Endeavor and is thrilled to be kicking off our first full length production! She would like to thank her family, friends, and her boyfriend Mitch for all their love & support, it means the world.



Leo Santucci

Don Pedro

Leo Santucci is both honored and lucky to be able to work with this talented group! He is the fight choreographer for ATC and is mainly seen as an actor on the Schiller Park stage, most recently as Willoughby in Sense and Sensability, and Seward in Dracula: a Feminist Revenge Fantasy. He wants you to enjoy the show, support the arts, and free Palestine. Much love!

Copyright @2021 On The Stage. All marks used by permission



Ollie Worden

Leonato

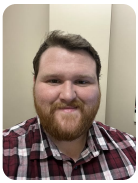
Ollie Worden is a Theatre Studies graduate from Capital University who has been performing around central Ohio for the past 8 years. They have been an avid Shakespeare fan ever since performing Much Ado About Nothing in high school as Don Pedro, and couldn't be happier to revisit the script for this third time after performing as Claudio in 2021 (Actors' Theatre of Columbus). They ardently believe that the best way to love Shakespeare's texts is to keep them relevant and thought-provoking, and it is an honor to be a part of this queer-oriented retelling at Endeavor under Corey & Ben's direction. The first Pride was a riot (upheaval) and to you, our guests in Messina, I hope our production is a riot (hilarious).



JT Walker

Antonio

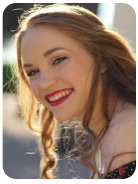
JT has been performing possibly since conception and has been doing so professionally since the age of 17. They have been a regular part of the Columbus entertainment scene since moving here in 2003 and have worked with a variety of theatres including Shadowbox Live, Actor's Theatre, Evolution and the It's All Been Done Radio Hour. They enjoy a wide variety of performance styles and can be seen out and about engaging in solo performance ranging from Piano/Vocal to Standup Comedy to Burlesque. JT loves reading, Doctor Who and Mora - the most precious and beautiful ginger lady purr machine in at least seven galaxies.



Tom Murdock

Dogberry

Tom Murdock (Dogberry) is thrilled to get to tackle another of Shakespeare's clowns with Endeavor! He was most recently seen onstage in Columbus Children's Theatre 2023 season as Dewey Finn (School of Rock: The Musical) and Mr. Krabs (The Spongebob Musical). He is a graduate of the OSU theatre department and an alumnus of the College Light Opera Company in Falmouth, MA. All love and thanks to Tess, Ripley, and the family.



Hannah Hutchison

Margaret/Verges

Hannah Hutchison (Margaret/Verges): Hannah is extremely excited to be performing with Endeavor Theatre, as "Much Ado About Nothing" is her first show in the Columbus area. She recently graduated with her BA in Theatre (Acting) from Arizona State University, with a minor in film and media production. Her most recent shows include ASU's "The Wolves" as #2 and Tempe Arts in the Parks x ASU's "Bubbled Up!" as Professor Round. When she is not filming a self-tape, she is either wedding planning or hiking with her German Shepherd Maggie May. She'd like to thank the spectacular cast & crew for their kindness and collaborative energy, and her fiancé for all his support.

Copyright @2021 On The Stage. All marks used by permission



Haley Justice

Ursula/Seacoal

Haley is thrilled to be back on the stage after a 7 year hiatus! Her last performance was in a local production of Eurydice in 2017 where she played the Loud Stone. Before 2017, Haley performed in various college and regional productions, including Arms and the Man (Raina), The Last Five Years (Kathy), The Mystery of Edwin Drood (Helena Landless), Almost, Maine (Hope) and Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (Christine Colgate), a role for which Haley received a DayTony award for Acting in a Leading Role in a Musical. Haley also has experience as an Assistant Director and writer. When Haley isn't rehearsing lines, she enjoys spending time with her new husband, running around with her 5 year old son, smashing pins at her weekly bowling league, or making plans to see her favorite artists on tour.



Michelle Baggerly

Don John

Michelle Baggerly has been on the stage since she was 8, and has been acting, singing, dancing, working behind the scenes, and overall shape shifting ever since. Michelle is grateful and thrilled to be working with the talented folx at Endeavor and to be given a chance to play a mustache-twirling villain. She would like to thank her family and friends for their unwavering love and support, her cat Nikolai for cuddles after long rehearsals, her husband, Benny, for his endless patience, and this amazing cast for their astounding talent, humor, and general tomfoolery.



John Quigley

Borachio

John Quigley (Borachio) is making his first appearance with Endeavor Theatre. John's recent theatrical performances include O.G. Productions' Spooky Taproom Takeover and Theatre Reset's Short Play Festival #2. John has made several appearances on film including The Heart of Big Moments (2023) and Cherry (2021). Offstage, John can be found stage managing and props mastering for a number of theatres in and around Columbus.

Copyright @2021 On The Stage. All marks used by permission

Endeavor Theatre Creative



Corey Ragan

Director, Sound Designer, Adaptation

Corey Ragan is a co-founder and Artistic Director of Endeavor Theatre. He is so grateful to have each of you here, supporting Endeavor's first full-length in almost five years. He wants to thank his wife Makenzie for encouraging him to take the leap and go all in on Endeavor. Her support is incredible and one of the only reasons any of us are here to watch a play! This show also wouldn't be possible without his board, Sarina & Dana! He can't wait for you all to see what Endeavor has in store for the future. Selected directing credits include: Imagine Productions: 35 MM: A Musical Exhibition, MadLab: The Graveyard Shift, Ohio University: People, Places, & Things, Big Love, Engagements. Endeavor Theatre: tour de lune, Young Americans or Stargirl Was Here.



Ben Wayne

Assistant Director,Props Supervisor

Ben is excited to share this show with you and hope you enjoy it! Or don't. He's the assistant director, not your dad. When not performing, directing, or writing for theater shows, Ben spends his time rolling dice and goofing off with friends around the board game table and cuddling with his cat, Pandora. He wants to thank the entire cast and crew for putting together an incredible show. And wants to thank his friends and family for their infinite patience with his neuroses, he wouldn't be here without their support.



Erin McLaughlin

Lighting Designer

Erin McLaughlin (lights) was a theatre teacher and director at Groveport Madison High School 2017-2022; in that role she designed lighting, sound, and sets, among other things. Since then, she has been dabbling in theatrical productions around Columbus, most recently designing lights for the Little Theatre Off Broadway's production of *Young Frankenstein* and serving as one of several directors for *Young Writers 2023* at MadLab. She would like to thank Corey Ragan for mentoring her as a theatre artist and letting her be a part of this production.

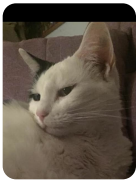
Copyright @2021 On The Stage. All marks used by permission



Tabitha Abney

Costume Designer

Passionate and innovative theatre costume designer, Tabitha Abney weaves enchanting tales through fabric and color. With a flair for storytelling, Tabi transforms characters into living works of art, from classical to avant-garde. Armed with an acute understanding of character psychology, she collaborates seamlessly with directors and actors to bring narratives to life. Adept at balancing tradition and modernity, Tabi infuses productions with visually stunning and emotionally resonant costumes, leaving an indelible mark on the stage.



Kate Hawthorne

Scenic Designer

Born at a young age, Kate Hawthorne emerged from a swamp filled with thespian crocodiles and one yellow shoe. Luckily these crocodiles did not eat her but instead encouraged her theatrical pursuits. After years of recreating scenes from early 1900 silent films using mostly stink bugs, bees, and one very confused praying mantis she was accepted into a university where she graduated with a degree in stylish hair ties, and minored in alternative healing with glitter. After graduation she performed several recreations of Hamlet using mostly sock puppets, spoons, and a trash can with googly eyes whose life was tragically cut short due to an incident with a hair dryer. Her long standing feud with Samuel Beckett's crusty ghost is still ongoing, and stronger than ever. She hopes to continue doing theatre in any kind of weather, except snow because snow is a terrible person.

Madison Young

Stage Manager

Kacie Hudson

Assistant Stage Manager

Copyright @2021 On The Stage. All marks used by permission

Interested in supporting more of Endeavor's work? You can do so with a tax deductible donation through our Venmo!



Endeavor Theatre

@endeavortheatre

venmo

EndeavorTheatre

Story

In the summer of 2016, Caroline Thompson & Corey Ragan were new graduates from the theatre program at Wittenberg University and trying to figure out how one could exist as an artist in the real world. Their first stab at this was producing an evening of original play readings at the former coffee shop, Kitamu Coffee.

After a successful night of readings, they did what all young artists do- Go to a bar, drink, and philosophize about art. There, a dear friend asked 'What name are you going to give to your little endeavor?" After MANY bad ideas, Corey suggested 'What if we just called it Endeavor?' Thus, we were born.

Over the next seven years, Corey & Caroline produced a number of projects, all while dreaming about what their endeavor could do. There were staged readings, from writers across the U.S., fully staged world premieres, and a digital showcase in 2020 raising money for the Georgia Senate Runoff.

We have had many faces over the years. We've experimented with length, form, and style. But, the one thing that remains at the heart of Endeavor is a need to leave the artistic world better than how we found it. Thank you for being a part of our journey.

EndeavorTheatre

Core Values

Intentionality - To redefine the historically exclusionary structure of theatre making, all Endeavor shows are cast color-consciously and inclusive of gender identities, sexuality, body shapes, and lived experiences. This dedication to reflecting the real world onstage will also be emphasized in works that are programmed and how projects are staffed.

Collaboration- Theatre is an inherently collaborative art form. Endeavor is founded on the idea that collaboration is at the center of all our processes. Here, the best idea wins and everyone's voices are valued.

Experimentation- Whether it's incubating new works or reimagining classical pieces through a contemporary lens, Endeavor is a place for artists to take risks and make mistakes without fear of failure. Meaningful growth cannot be achieved without fearless attempts at change.

EndeavorTheatre

Mission

To radically redefine the way stories are told and theatre is made.

Vision

We hope to build a community of like-minded artists while presenting professionally produced work that challenges traditional conventions of theatre making.

There has been so much talk of theatre dying. Our question; What is theatre? How can it be made to reflect the world today? What does theatre look like in a world that seems hell-bent on beating artistic expression out of our society?

Through intentional & inclusive production practices, we are creating an environment where artists can ask questions, take risks, and help build an artistic community that proudly challenges what it means to create theatre today.

endeavor theatre

Networking Event



Pins Easton

May 3, 2024

7:00-9:00

We're looking for new artists to work with!

Come get to know Endeavor and learn more about us!