



REDUCED SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

# THE COMEDY OF HAMLET! (a prequel)

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY REED MARTIN & AUSTIN TICHENOR

## MARCH 12-30, 2025



MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE

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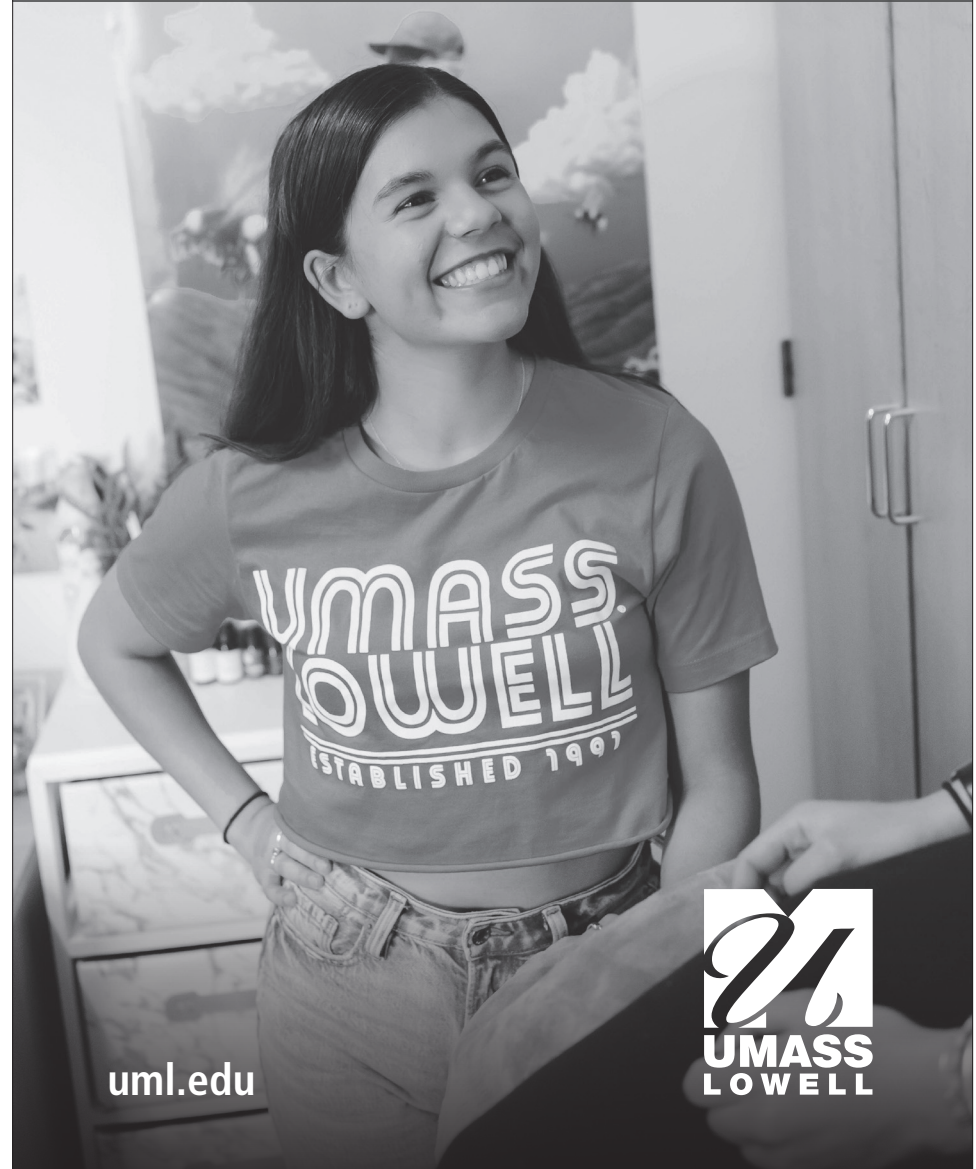
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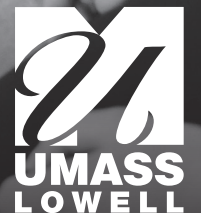
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# COURTNEY SALE

NANCY L. DONAHUE EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Dear MRT Community,

## Welcome to our 300th production!

I am delighted to welcome back Reduced Shakespeare Company (RSC) to MRT with their latest madcap romp, *The Comedy of Hamlet! (a prequel)*. RSC and MRT have a long history of collaborating. I often field requests for bringing RSC back from long time subscribers. We are thrilled this reunion will infuse the halls and walls of Liberty

Hall with laughter.

Comedy is important right now. On the surface, it could be perceived as merely a vehicle to trigger our laugh reflexes (which is helpful). But on a deeper level, it allows us to see we are not in control of the universe. A humorous gag can rise up and trip up even the most enlightened of us. Comedy is therapeutic and wildly humbling. I hope you leave this show sated by joy and with your cheeks aching from laughter!

As always, huge gratitude to the entire MRT community for making this show possible. It truly takes a village.

In service,

Courtney

P.S. To our subscribers, thank you for your continued support. Keep your eyes peeled for 25-26 renewal information which will hit mailboxes soon!

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Cost of CSC. Production of *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*. Photo by Mikki Schaffner.

Manny Cavaleiro Michael Cavaleiro

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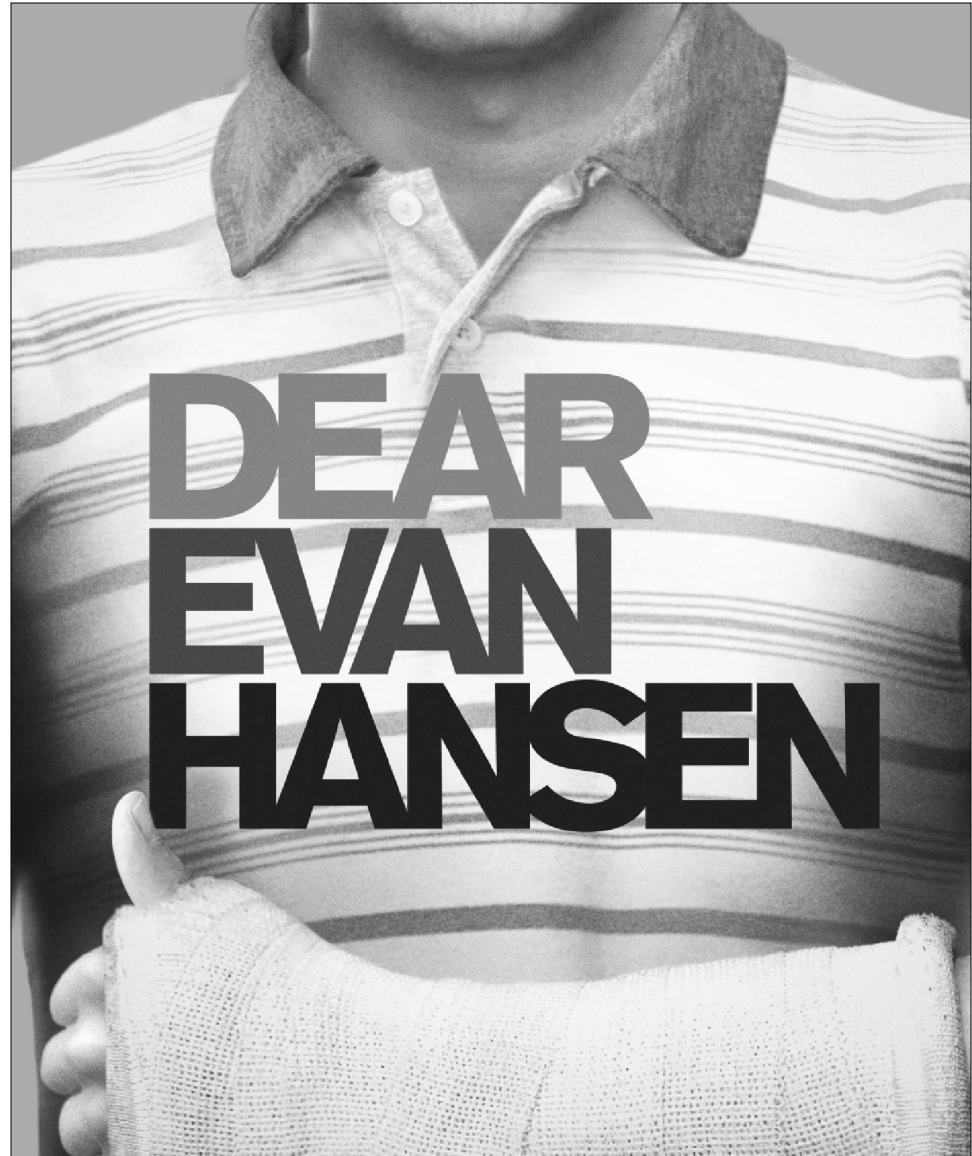
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# DEAR EVAN HANSEN

**APRIL 7**  
7:30PM

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## THANK YOU FOR JOINING US IN 2023-24 SEASON!

PHOTOS BY MEGPIX/MEGHAN MOORE: (1) Alaudin Ullah in *Dishwasher Dreams*. | (2) Celena Lopes in *Red Riding Hood*. | (3) (L-R) David M. Lutken, EJ Zimmerman, and Rob Morrison in *The Porch on Windy Hill*. | (4) The Youth Cast in *A Christmas Carol*. | (5) (L-R) Kristin Yancy and Tom Coiner in *Spiritus*. | (6) Dael Orlandersmith in *Spiritus/Virgil's Dance*. PHOTO BY SETH FREEMAN. | (7) (L-R) Tom Coiner, Chris Thorn, Karen McDonald, Alexis Bronkovic, Kristin Yancy, and The Youth Cast in *A Christmas Carol*.





PRESENTS

# THE COMEDY OF HAMLET! (A PREQUEL)

WRITTEN BY

**REED MARTIN & AUSTIN TICHENOR**

STARRING

**GEOFFREY BARNES\***  
**DOUG HARVEY\***  
**AUSTIN TICHENOR\***

BACKDROP DESIGNER  
**TIM HOLTSLAG**

COSTUME DESIGNER  
**FREYA MARCELIUS**

SOUND DESIGNERS

**MATTHEW COWELL, ZACH MOORE**

STAGE MANAGER

**ELAINE RANDOLPH\***

DIRECTED BY

**REED MARTIN & AUSTIN TICHENOR**

**MARCH 12-30, 2025**

*THE COMEDY OF HAMLET! (A PREQUEL)* WAS WORKSHOPPED AND DEVELOPED AS *HAMLET'S BIG ADVENTURE! (A PREQUEL)* AT **SHAKESPEARE NAPA VALLEY** (JENNIFER KING, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR). DIRECTED BY THE AUTHORS, THE CAST WAS PETER DOWNEY, JESSICA ROMERO, AND CHAD YARISH.

\*Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

^Member of United Scenic Artists

+Member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers

## CAST

Geoffrey Barnes\* ..... Yorick, Liliith, et. al.  
Doug Harvey\* ..... Hamlet, et. al.  
Austin Tichenor\* ..... The King, Ophelia, et. al.

## ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS

RSC General Manager ..... Jane Martin  
Office Manager ..... Alli Bostedt  
Dramaturg ..... Kate Pitt  
Wardrobe Supervisor & Maintenance ..... Erin Sweeney, Liz Fitzpatrick Griffin  
Props ..... Tim Holtslag, Mercedes Rivera  
Additional Graphics ..... Chad Yarish  
Webmaster ..... GingerPower, Ltd.  
U.S. Tour Direction ..... Kosson Talent  
Legal Counsel ..... Sharon Colchamiro, Esq.  
Company Founder ..... Daniel Singer

## MUSIC CREDITS

Beats by ..... Zach Moore  
Original Circus Music Composed by ..... Peter Bufano; performed by Cirkestra  
"In Summary" by ..... Reed Martin and Austin Tichenor  
"In Summary" accompaniment arranged and performed by ..... Michael Faulkner  
"The Plan" by ..... Austin Tichenor



\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



+Member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, a national theatrical labor union.



^The Scenic, Costume, Lighting, and Sound Designers in this production are represented by United Scenic Artists (USA) Local USA-829, IATSE.



Merrimack Repertory Theatre is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre.



Merrimack Repertory Theatre operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), a consortium of regional theatres throughout the nation, and AEA (Actors' Equity Association), SDC (Stage Directors and Choreographers Society), and USA (United Scenic Artists).

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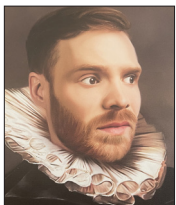
## FOR INSPIRATION AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCRIPT, THE AUTHORS WISH TO THANK:

Kate Pitt, Jennifer King, Laurence Olivier, Danny Kaye, Tom Lehrer, Lar DeSouza, Christopher Moore, Teddy Spencer, Peter Downey, Jessica Romero, Chad Yarish, Johanne Brøsted, Mya Gosling, Zach Moore, Dee Ryan, and Jane Martin.

### WHO'S WHO



**GEOFFREY BARNES** (Yorick, Lilith, et al) has performed many shows with Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, including Tio in *Fat Ham*, Jonathan in *The Play That Goes Wrong*, Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Oberon in *Midsummer*, Gabriel in *Fences*, Walter Lee Younger in *A Raisin in the Sun*, Sir Andrew in *Twelfth Night* (directed by Austin Tichenor), and *Complete History of America*, *All the Great Books*, and *Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged)*. He's also played Ariel in *The Tempest* (Oregon Shakespeare); John Heminges in *The Book of Will* and Stephano in *The Tempest* (Illinois Shakespeare Festival); Ronald in *Hands on a Hardbody* (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati); and *Ragtime* in Austin TX.



**DOUG HARVEY** (Hamlet, et al) is honored to bring his reduced stature to the RSC. Notable stage credits include: South Coast Repertory, California Shakespeare Theatre, the LA Philharmonic, A Noise

Within, and James Still's *And Then They Came for Me* at Mainstreet Theatre Company (Winner: 2020 LA Ovation Award for Best Production in a Large Venue). For the RSC, he's toured with *The Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged)*, *The Complete History of Comedy (abridged)*, and *All the Great Books (abridged)*. His solo show *A Time Traveler's Guide to the Present* has toured LA, Edinburgh, and New York. He also live-narrates planetarium shows at LA's Griffith Observatory. BFA: NYU Tisch and RADA. Stay on the signal at [doug-harvey.com](http://doug-harvey.com).



**AUSTIN TICHENOR** (The King, Ophelia, et al; Co-Author & Co-Director) co-created ten RSC stage shows, the illustrated children's books *Pop-Up Shakespeare* and *Daisy the Littlest Zombie*, and writes about Shakespeare and pop culture for the Folger Shakespeare Library. He and RSC partner Reed Martin received the 2025 Berger Award from the international Shakespeare Theatre Association in recognition of outstanding talent and dedication to the works of William

Shakespeare. Recent non-RSC credits in Chicago include Burbage in *The Book of Will*'s midwest premiere at Northlight Theatre and three years as Alternate Scrooge in the Goodman Theatre's *Christmas Carol*. Numerous TV jobs include guest starring on *The West Wing*, *Gilmore Girls*, *24*, *Felicity*, *The X-Files* (and shows like them) and he produces and hosts the world's oldest longest-running weekly theatre podcast, the Reduced Shakespeare Company Podcast.

**JANE MARTIN** (RSC General Manager) Prior to joining the RSC and sleeping with Reed, Jane was Artistic Director of the Hawk's Well Theatre in Sligo, Ireland and then producer of the physical comedy troupe The Right Size in London, England. In her copious free time away from RSC business, Jane spends time raising two boys (three, if you count Reed) and teaching Theater at Sonoma Valley High School.

**REED MARTIN** (Co-Author & Co-Director) co-created eleven RSC shows, and has performed at The White House, Madison Square Garden, London's West End, The Lincoln Center, and The Kennedy Center. He has written for the BBC, TBS, National Public Radio, Britain's Channel Four, RTE Ireland, Public Radio International, The Washington Post and Vogue magazine. His work has been nominated for an Olivier Award in London, a Helen Hayes Award in Washington, DC, and a San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critic's

### WHO'S WHO

Circle Award. Along with his RSC partner Austin Tichenor, Reed was awarded the 2025 Sandra & Sidney Berger Award by the international Shakespeare Theatre Association which is presented annually to an Artistic Director in recognition of outstanding talent and dedication to the works of William Shakespeare. He lives in Northern California with his wife, who is much funnier than he is.

**KATE PITT** (Dramaturg)'s dramaturgical credits include *American Apollo* at Des Moines Metro Opera; *The Weight of Light*, *The Beekeeper*, and *The Transformation of Jane Doe* at Chicago Opera Theater; and being a Resident Artist at American Lyric Theater. Directing credits include *Henry V* at MIT Shakespeare Ensemble; and assistant directing *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V* at Guthrie Theater, *Romeo and Juliet* at The Acting Company, and *King Lear* at Shakespeare Theatre Company. Kate also spent four years creating Public Programs at the Folger Shakespeare Library. Training: Yale: BA in History. SDC Associate. [www.katepitt.com](http://www.katepitt.com).

**ELAINE M. RANDOLPH** (Stage Manager) Credits include stage management (compulsive) and lighting design (creative) in theater, music, and dance, for the Kennedy Center, Walnut Street Theater, Actors' Theater of Louisville, among many others. Recent projects include Barbara Cook in Concert, The International Ballet Festival, and The



## WHO'S WHO

Sondheim Celebration. Favorite projects include: *Quilters*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Noises Off*, *Pump Boys & Dinettes*, *A Tuna Christmas*, and *A Christmas Carol*.

**DANIEL SINGER** (RSC Founder) has been a theatrical impresario from the moment he looked up 'impresario' in the dictionary. Upon his return from studying "proper dramatic technique" in London, he became a director at the original Renaissance Pleasure Faire, where he founded the subversive Reduced Shakespeare Company. In 1989 Daniel hung up his doublet-and-hose to design theme park attractions at Walt Disney Imagineering, and became a freelance designer, writer and event producer in Los Angeles. His new hit comedy *A Perfect Likeness* chronicles Lewis Carroll's (fictitious) attempt to get his literary hero Charles Dickens to pose for a photograph in 1866 Oxford.

**COURTNEY SALE** (Nancy L. Donahue Executive Artistic Director) she/her/hers. Courtney proudly serves as the MRT's Executive Artistic Director. She joined the company in March of 2020 and is honored to work for a remarkable organization with incredible people. At MRT she has directed *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*, *Gaslight*, *The 39 Steps*, *A Woman Of The World*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Playwrights commissioned under her tenure include Trista Baldwin, Vichet Chum, Kevin Kling, Melinda Lopez, Dael Orlandersmith, James Still, Kanean Ung, and launched the Sokhary

Chau Playwriting Fellowship. Under her leadership, MRT has increased service to students, strengthened its partnership in community, and ensured artistic excellence. She serves on Lowell's Canal Cultural District Management Committee. Courtney's directing has been seen across the country: *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Seattle Rep), *The Overview Effect*, *Support Group For Men*, *The Cake*, *Wild Horses*, *Not Medea* (Contemporary American Theater Festival), *The Mountaintop*, *The Mousetrap*, *April 4 1968*, (Indiana Rep, also Associate Artistic Director 2013-2016), *Gaslight* (Cincinnati Shakes), *On Clover Road* (Phoenix Theatre), *Twelfth Night* (IndyShakes). She previously served as the Artistic Director at Seattle Children's Theatre (SCT), the nation's leading generator of new work for family audiences. She has developed new work with the Denver Center, New Harmony Project, Dorset Theatre Festival, Emerson Stage, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, and the Orchard Project. Other distinctions include Cornish College Distinguished Alumni Award, IBJ's 40 under 40 designation, and the 2017 keynote at the International Council of Fine Arts Deans. Courtney is a member of the National Theatre Conference. BFA, Cornish College of the Arts. MFA, The University of Texas at Austin.

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## WHO'S WHO

new stories, new interpretations of classics, new voices on stage, new audiences, and new collaborations that help people feel, think, and connect.

As one of the leading performing arts organizations in the Merrimack Valley, we aim to enhance the quality of life in our region by creating space for joy, thought, conversation, and shared experiences. We are a hub for compassionate community, dynamic cultural expression, learning experiences, and economic vitality.

We lead with artistic excellence. We foster a culture of belonging and inclusion. We embrace lifelong learning and education. We practice sustainable stewardship of resources.

As a non-profit, we aim to provide a welcoming and inclusive space for all. We partner with businesses and other non-profits to fully engage the community; and contribute to the economic and cultural vitality of Lowell.

Recent acclaimed productions include *Spiritus/Virgil's Dance*, *The Porch on Windy Hill*, *Letters from Home*, *The 39 Steps*, *Best Summer Ever*, *Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*, the bestselling production in MRT's history, and *The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley*, both by Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon; *Cambodian Rock Band* by Lauren Yee and *KNYUM* by Vichet Chum, works in celebration of Lowell's Cambodian community; *The Haunted Life*, a world premiere adaptation of Jack Kerouac's unfinished novel; the world premiere of *The Rise and Fall of Holly Fudge* by Trista Baldwin; and plays about the Black experience, including *Until the Flood* by Dael Orlandersmith, *Nina Simone: Four Women* by Christina Ham, and *Back Together Again: The Music of Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway*.



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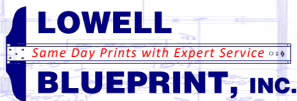
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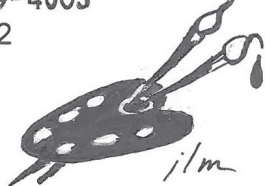
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