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1997-1998



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# Ann Arbor Civic Theatre

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Welcome!

Another exciting season at the Ann Arbor Civic Theater is underway, and I welcome each one of you to this performance. AACT exists because of its members, subscribers, and individual ticket buyers, and it brings together an eclectic group of performers, technicians, volunteers and audiences in appreciation of the theater arts.

Christopher Potter, in the Ann Arbor News, called the 1996-1997 AACT season "the most ambitious in recent memory." If so, then we have great plans to surpass that ambition this year as we explore the world of award winning plays and musicals. Each show this season has received multiple awards: Tonys, Obies, Drama Desk Awards, Grammy Awards and other prizes.

The performers and technicians who give their valuable time and energy to bring you each performance are all unpaid volunteers here at Civic Theater. People share their strengths, their skills and their love of theater to produce exciting, challenging and entertaining works for the community. Over the years, AACT has brought you the biggest, newest Broadway fare, as well as lesser-known but highly deserving works. This season promises no less.

We celebrate the new season as we "grow into" our own home, the lovely Civic Playhouse. During the course of the year you will see some changes, additions and improvements to make your theater-going experience at our Platt Road playhouse enjoyable and more comfortable. Let us know what we can do to make it more enjoyable for you! It is the rare community theatre that owns its own space—and Ann Arbor can be truly proud of its playhouse.

I look forward to meeting many of you during the course of the season. Here's to a season of award-winning shows, at an award-winning playhouse, with an award-winning troupe of players! We cannot do any of this without our award-winning audiences!

Sincerely,

*Ronald P. Baumanis*

Ronald P. Baumanis

President, AACT Board of Directors



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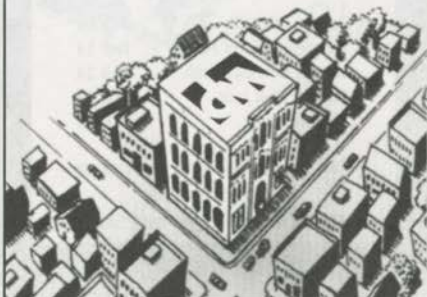


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# THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

WRITTEN BY  
William Shakespeare

DIRECTED BY  
Natalie Holbrook

April 16–26, 1998

Thursdays–Saturdays at 8 pm

Sundays at 2 pm

Ann Arbor Civic Theatre Playhouse  
2275 Platt Road

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Keeping up with the public demand was a driving force behind Shakespeare's works. *The Merchant of Venice* was written in the wake of the trial of a Portuguese Jew, Roderigo Lopez, who was accused of attempting to poison Elizabeth I. The anti-Semitic fever following that trial triggered a number of plays, most notoriously *The Jew of Malta* by Christopher Marlowe and perhaps Shakespeare, in his own way, was seeking justice.

Finding contemporary parallels to *The Merchant of Venice* is disturbingly simple. Just replace the word "Jew" in this production with "Palestinian", "Bosnian Muslim", or "Rwandan Refugee." The legacy of the Holocaust in our time has become the rise of genocide and hate-crime.

America is where this production takes place. The days of institutionalized racism are gone, but we need look no further than the World Trade Center bombing or the Ku Klux Klan headquarters in our own state to see the intolerance still very much with us today. Pop culture now embraces spokesmen from every hate group with access to a microphone.

But this is just the hate we can see and touch with our hands. Our Merchant has more to do with undercurrents, the notion of assimilation in the business world, the images of All-Americanism passed down to us from Madison Avenue and Capitol Hill, and most of all, the question of who is invited to the power table and who is not.

A huge thank you to my professor, Ronald Nash, who has given me a tremendous amount of support over the years and urged me to go forward with this concept... especially since I need this independent study project to graduate! Also thank you to Peterson, Williams & Bizer, Inc. for the use of the projectors. Most importantly, thank you to my cast and crew who have worked hard and dedicated much time to the creation of this vision. Thank you to Troy who volunteered more time and help than anyone could ask for.

-Natalie Holbrook



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## CAST

(in alphabetical order)

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Nerissa .....           | Julia Barden         |
| Shylock .....           | Robin Barlow         |
| Bassanio .....          | Glenn Bugala         |
| Saleria .....           | Eileen Donis-Forster |
| Lorenzo .....           | Danny Ferman         |
| Prince of Morocco ..... | Earl Ford            |
| Tubal .....             | David Keren          |
| Launcelot .....         | Josh Kjolhede        |
| Antonio .....           | David C. Lai         |
| Gratiano/Arragon .....  | Joseph Radding       |
| Solanio/Duke .....      | Troy D. Sill         |
| Portia .....            | Dana Sutton          |
| Jessica .....           | Melanie Wilson       |

## SYNOPSIS

|                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Act I, scene i .....     | Country Club Bar         |
| Act I, scene ii .....    | Portia's Livingroom      |
| Act I, scene iii .....   | Shylock's Office         |
| Act II, scene i .....    | The Street               |
| Act II, scene ii .....   | Shylock's House          |
| Act II, scene iii .....  | Country Club Bar         |
| Act II, scene iv .....   | Shylock's House          |
| Act II, scene v .....    | The Street               |
| Act II, scene vi ...     | A Room in Portia's House |
| Act II, scene vii .....  | Country Club Bar         |
| Act II, scene viii .     | A Room in Portia's House |
| Act III, scene i .....   | Country Club Bar         |
| Act III, scene ii ..     | A Room in Portia's House |
| Act III, scene iii ..... | Portia's Livingroom      |
| Act III, scene iv .....  | The Street               |
| Act III, scene v .....   | Portia's Livingroom      |
| Act III, scene vi .....  | Portia's Livingroom      |
| Act IV, scene i .....    | The Courtroom            |
| Act IV, scene ii .....   | The Street               |
| Act V .....              | Outside Portia's House   |

## Production Staff

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Director .....               | Natalie Holbrook                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Asst. Director/Stage Mgr. .. | Sandy Walke                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Producer .....               | Julie Roberts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Set Designer .....           | Toni Auletti                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Set Builder .....            | Robert Seeman                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Costume Designer .....       | Suzanne Young                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Lighting Designer .....      | Thom Johnson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Sound Designer .....         | Jeff Zupan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Properties Designer .....    | Cheryl Berteel                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Publicity Director .....     | Cassie Mann                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Graphic Design .....         | Erik Ivar Olsen                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Photography .....            | Joseph Radding                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Set Crew ...                 | Louise Conlon, Jill Dumsch,<br>Nikki Gillis, Adam Gobetti, Becky<br>Groeb, Andy Hoag, Emily Landau,<br>Michelle LeShan, Scott Mancha,<br>Pauline McDonald, Megan Mishler,<br>Jon Ophoff, Brad Pitts, Elaine Rice,<br>Jason Tait, Barb Wells, Joe Wood,<br>Fr. Gabriel Richard H.S. Drama Club |
| Costume Crew .....           | Vivian Sykes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Sound Design ..              | Jeff Zupan, Troy D. Sill,<br>Natalie Holbrook                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Properties Crew .....        | Barb Wells                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Lightboard Operator .....    | Louie Brennan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Soundboard Operator .....    | Dana Greener                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Running Crew ..              | Susan Kay, Steve Horn,<br>Lauren Opra, Jennifer Schaffer,<br>Libby Whalen, Michele LeShan                                                                                                                                                                                                     |



**JULIA ANN BARDEN (NERISSA)**  
Last seen on the AACT stage in 1997's *The Sisters Rosensweig*, it's a pleasure to have

Julia back again playing the role of Nerissa. At Michigan State she appeared in such productions as *The Shakespeare Tour*, *Dutchman*, and *Laundry & Bourbon*.



**ROBIN BARLOW (SHYLOCK)** No stranger to AACT or Shakespeare, Robin has appeared in *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *Hamlet* for this group and has also made appearances with the St.

Andrew's Players and the Comic Opera Guild. An economist at the School of Public Health at the U of M and former AACT Board President, Robin would like to dedicate his efforts in this play to the memory of his late mother, who played the part of Launcelot Gobbo in a girls' school production of *Merchant of Venice* in England in 1922.



**GLENN BUGALA (BASSANIO)** Glenn's work for AACT includes directing this season's highly successful *A Little Night Music* and

acting in recent productions of *Taming of The Shrew* (Petruccio) and *Blithe Spirit* (Charles). A BA Theatre grad of the U of M, and and MFA Performance grad from Purdue, his favorite professional roles include Les in *Bouncers*, Voice One in *Under Milkwood*, and Andrew in *Love Letters*. Next season Glenn will be directing the great American classic *The Rainmaker* for AACT.



**DANNY E. FERMAN (LORENZO)** A familiar face around AACT the last few years, Danny is a man of few words who

says he's "just damn glad to be here" in this production with Natalie as Director.



**E.G.FORD (PRINCE OF MOROCCO)** Earl is currently working towards a Ph.D. in Philosophy but makes time in his

schedule for pursuing an interest in the arts. Recently seen in AACT's *Big River* as an ensemble player, this is his second appearance on stage.



**EILEEN DONIS-FORSTER (SALERIA)** Fresh from appearances in AACT's Christmas Show and the 1998 Cabaret Benefit,

Eileen's other stage appearances include *Blithe Spirit* (Ruth) and *How the Other Half Loves* (Theresa). She attended the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston.

DAVID KEREN (TUBAL) Last seen as Grandpa in AACT's hit *You Can't Take It With You* and in last season's *Bye Bye Birdie* (Harry MacAfee), David is a past winner of the John Rae Cameo Award. A pathologist at Warde Medical Laboratory when not trodding the boards, David enjoys old movies and would like to thank "a very patient and supportive secret friend for the past 32 years (don't tell my wife!)."



JOSH KJOLHEDE  
(LAUNCELOT GOBBO)

This is Josh's first appearance with AACT but has appeared on other stages in *I Hate Hamlet* (Andrew), *The Room* (Bert), and *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (Edmund). Josh is a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy and is spending this year at Eastern Michigan University before transferring to the Hart School of Drama in Connecticut this fall.



DAVID CHING LAI  
(ANTONIO) A newcomer to AACT, David has appeared in *Macbeth* (U/M)

and *Bond James:007-90210*. Pursuing multiple studies at the U of M, he would like to thank "Natalie and Sandy for all their time and help; the cast for the experience; and extra love to my family and friends who have given me so much of their lives."



JOSEPH RADDING  
(GRATIANO/THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON) was most recently the Assistant Director for AACT's successful

production of *You Can't Take It With You*. He has also been seen on AACT's stage as The Player in *Hamlet* for which he won the John Rae Cameo Award, The Player in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, and as R.P. MacMurphy in *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*. Joe is the creative director for a large marketing company and serves on of the Board of Directors for AACT. "Grazie, dolce mio."



TROY D. SILL  
(SOLANIO/DUKE) This is Troy's sixth play at the Civic. Ann Arbor theater goers may also know him from his

work at the Performance Network. He recently appeared there in *No Exit* and *The Birthday Party*.





DANA SUTTON  
(PORTIA) An EMU  
Theatre and  
History Honor  
Student, Dana is  
making her first  
AACT appearance.

On other stages she has played of Bella (*Lost In Yonkers*), Lyubov (*The Cherry Orchard*), and won a Best Actress Award for her performance as Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*). Dana enjoys dancing, singing, reading, and camping (when forced).



MELANIE J.  
WILSON (JESSICA)  
This is Melanie's  
second appearance  
with AACT  
(Helena/*R.U.R.*)  
and has performed

at Wright State University (*Ophelia/Hamlet*) and with the Blue Jeans Shakespeare Co. (*Juliet/Romeo and Juliet* and *Hermia/Midsummer's Night Dream*). A registered nurse at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Melanie is also a SAFD certified actor combatant in hand to hand, quarterstaff, rapier and dagger stage combat. "Thank you so much AACT!"



NATALIE HOLBROOK (DIRECTOR) is directing her first production with AACT. She recently appeared as Bianca in AACT's *The Taming of the Shrew* and was the producer for AACT's *A Little Night Music*. She holds a BA in Theatre from the University of Massachusetts and has directed and acted in various regional and community theatres around the country.

Directing credits include *STAGES* by Louis E. Roberts, *SANCTUARY* by Kevin Kovacs, *The Effect of Gamma Rays...* by Paul Zindel, *The Hot L Baltimore* by Lanford Wilson and the Assistant Director for *H.M.S. Pinafore* by Gilbert & Sullivan at the Folger in Washington, D.C. which was nominated for a 1996 Helen Hayes Award. Acting credits include Ophelia in *Hamlet*, Irma in *The Madwoman of Chailot*, Trinket in Tennessee Williams' *The Mutilated*, The Girl in *The Hot L Baltimore*, the Girl in *The Balcony*, Ruth in *The Effect of Gamma Rays...*, Nancy in *Angel Street*, Phebe in *As You Like It*, Donna in *Stops Along the Way*, Harriet in *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, and Marjorie in *Extremities*. She has studied acting, directing and playwriting at the University of North Carolina, the University of Massachusetts, The Studio Theatre and The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C. and on Nantucket Island for the summer playwriting and directing program.

*The Merchant of Venice* is dedicated to her professor, Ronald Nash.

**TONI YVETTE AULETTI (SET DESIGNER)**  
This is Toni's first Civic show but she has a long list of professional design credits to her name including the current All City Players production of *Fame, The Musical*. She is the Resident Designer and Scenic Artist for Wild Swan Theatre where she has designed such shows as *1000 Cranes* and also has worked extensively with Clearspace Summer Musical Theatre having most recently designed *The Comedy Club* there. At the U of M Toni has designed such shows as *The Marriage of Bette and Boo* and *Tooth of Crime*, and is currently working on her 50th show as an Assistant Scenic Artist with the University. She received her MFA/Honors in Stage Design from U of M and her BFA in Technical Theatre from Wayne State University, Cum Laude. Recently married to "the greatest guy", Toni also designs and paints murals for children's murals and peoples homes.

**CHERYL BERTEEL (PROPERTIES DESIGN)**  
A current member of the AACT Board of Directors, Cheryl is also an active member of the technical staff. Her most recent costume work was for *You Can't Take It With You* and won an award for her costumes for *My Favorite Year* during the 1996-97 season. Cheryl designed props for *City of Angels* and *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* that same year. Employed by Sears, reading and traveling are two of her favorite hobbies and she also changes the sign out front at the

Civic Playhouse... always hoping for shows with short names! Cheryl says "thanks to Mom and Dad".

**THOM JOHNSON (LIGHTING DESIGN)**  
A frequent lighting designer for AACT (*A Little Night Music*), TJ also directs (*You Can't Take it With You* and the award-winning *Noises Off*) and acts (John Barrymore in *I Hate Hamlet*). He works for a living, smokes an occasional cigar, and does not jog.

**CASSIE MANN (PUBLICITY DIRECTOR)**  
An accomplished actress and director, Cassie most recently was seen in a two-woman dramatic program at the Ann Arbor Public Library celebrating Womens' History Month. Earlier this season AACT audiences saw her in *Lost In Yonkers* (Gert) and she directed *Six Degrees of Separation* in 1996. An editorial assistant for a scientific journal, Cassie enjoys reading, roller blading, and hanging out with her kids.

**ERIK IVAR OLSEN (GRAPHIC DESIGN)**  
AACT audiences will recognize Erik from his performances in the recent Civic shows *Big River* and *You Can't Take It With You* but he has also appeared with UMGASS, Comedy Company, Performance Network, and The Dexter Community Players. He had the glorious title of "unpaid intern" at WNWO and WJBK. Erik makes the claim that he "shared Beck's and a lingering handshake with Josie Lawrence. I am so not lying about that."



**JULIE ROBERTS (PRODUCTION COORDINATOR)** A long time theater fan, this is Julie's first actual involvement with a production. By profession, she is a graphic designer for Peterson, Williams & Bizer. Julie would like to thank Natalie for showing her the ropes and to Mary Jo for "dragging me into all this!"

**BOB SEEMAN (SET BUILDER)** A fixture around AACT for many, many years, the 1997/98 season has been a busy one for him not only at Civic but with his many other theater group affiliations including Pioneer H.S., Fr. Gabriel Richard H.S., Burns Park Players and University Productions at U of M. An Annie Award winner for his involvement with the Ann Arbor theater community, Bob is semi-retired and quite possibly at the end of this season "this kid (will) need to be sent to fresh air camp!"

**SANDY WALKE (ASST. DIR./STAGE MANAGER)** This is Sandy's "third or fourth show for AACT without a break and likely the last for at least a little while. A life would be a nice

thing to try for once." He appeared in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *You Can't Take It With You*, and *The Taming of The Shrew* and did tech work on *The Farndale... Christmas Carol* and *Sisters Rosensweig*. Sandy would like to thank Natalie for teaching him so much about "talkin', gesturin', movin', actin' and theatre in general."

**SUZANNE YOUNG (COSTUME DESIGNER)** Suzanne has worked extensively in costuming, both in the U.S. and in England where she was trained. She returns to costuming after taking time out to raise her two boys.

**JEFF ZUPAN (SOUND DESIGN)** Jeff's most recent theater credit is as the director of Saline Area Players production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. This season at AACT he served as Assistant Director/Stage Manager/Sound Designer for *Lost In Yonkers* and designed sound for *A Little Night Music*. His other credits with AACT go back many seasons and he also serves as the group's Sound Department Chair. In his non-theater life, Jeff is an amateur zymurgist.



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The box office at the Civic Playhouse is open Monday through Friday, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. During events at the Civic Playhouse, the box office is also open from 7:15 pm to 8:15 pm.

During events at Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre, the box office in the Michigan League is open Thursday through Saturday from 12:00 noon to 8:15 pm, and on Sunday from 12:00 noon to 2:15 pm.

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# THE 1997-1998 SEASON

## **Lost in Yonkers**

WRITTEN BY NEIL SIMON • DIRECTED BY JOY BAKER DENNIS  
September 18-21, 1997, Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre

## **The Baltimore Waltz**

WRITTEN BY PAULA VOGEL • DIRECTED BY AMY KULLENBERG  
October 16-26, 1997, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **A Little Night Music**

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY STEPHEN SONDHEIM • BOOK BY HUGH WHEELER  
DIRECTED BY GLENN BUGALA  
November 13-23, 1997, with Saturday matinees, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **Junior Theatre—Stuart Little**

WRITTEN BY E. B. WHITE • DRAMATIZED BY JOSEPH ROBINETTE  
December 4-7, 1997, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **The Farnsdale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen's Guild Society's Production of A Christmas Carol**

WRITTEN BY DAVID MCGILLIVRAY AND WALTER ZERLIN JR.  
DIRECTED BY JAN KOENGETER  
December 18-21, 1997, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **You Can't Take It With You**

WRITTEN BY MOSS HART & GEORGE S. KAUFMAN • DIRECTED BY THOM JOHNSON  
January 22-February 1, 1998, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **An Evening of Cabaret**

February 13 & 14, 1998, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **Big River**

BOOK BY WILLIAM HAUPTMAN • MUSIC AND LYRICS BY ROGER MILLER  
DIRECTED BY MELISSA RYAN  
March 5-15, 1998, with Saturday matinees, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **Junior Theatre—Heidi**

WRITTEN BY JOHANNA SPYRI • DRAMATIZED BY JUNE WALKER ROGERS  
March 26-29, 1998, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **The Merchant of Venice**

WRITTEN BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE • DIRECTED BY NATALIE HOLBROOK  
April 16-26, 1998, Civic Theatre Playhouse

## **Jesus Christ Superstar**

LYRICS BY TIM RICE • MUSIC BY ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER  
DIRECTION, CHOREOGRAPHY AND CONCERT STAGING BY RONALD P. BAUMANIS  
May 14-17, 1998, with Saturday matinee, Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre

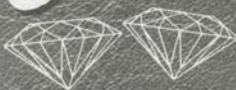
## **Dancing at Lughnasa**

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June 11-21, 1998, Civic Theatre Playhouse

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