

Join us next year for our 2017-2018 season:

## The Drowning Girls

by Beth Graham, Charlie Tomlinson, & Daniela Vlaskalic  
Directed by Liz Carlin Metz

## Minnesota Moon

by John Olive  
Directed by Joel Willison '20

## TOP GIRLS

by Caryl Churchill  
Directed by Ren Barkey '18

## Doctor Faustus

by Christopher Marlowe  
Directed by Sarah Lowe '18

## The Good Person of Szechwan

by Bertolt Brecht  
Directed by Neil Blackadder

## Time Flies

by David Ives  
Directed by Jennie Jeoung '19

## For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls

By Christopher Durang  
Directed by Ellie Baird '20

## Dead Man's Cell Phone

by Sarah Ruhl  
Directed by Brady Comenduley '18

## Fix Me, Jesus

by Helen Sneed  
Directed by Zak Metalsky '18

## THE GLASS MENAGERIE

by Tennessee Williams  
Directed by Jeff Grace

## Almost-Never Land

by Megan Molloy '18  
Directed by Maty Ortega '18  
'18

## Torvald, the Musical

by Aidan Murphy '18  
Directed by Aidan Murphy

# The Importance of Being Larnest

by Oscar Wilde



## WELCOME TO KNOX COLLEGE THEATRE

Welcome to the final production of the Department of Theatre 2016-17 Harbach Season. We are pleased to celebrate with you our work in the field of theatre. Knox audiences have viewed productions ranging from a contemporary, cutting edge examination of morality in the age of virtual reality to Shakespeare's considerations of power and ambition to tonight's famous satiric take on social constructions of class and romance. Students who have participated in theatre productions this year come from across the academic disciplines, represent all four class-years, and annually number approximately 400. Every year we seek to enlarge the classroom experience by manifesting on stage the material investigated in books and discussions, with computers and construction tools, and through critical papers and experiential work in text and performance. Each year we seek plays that are in conversation with the human experience—past, present, and future. We select for our seasons a range of plays, which, if considered over the four year tenure of a Knox student, will expose that student to a wide range of lenses with which to view the human condition. This vast canon of dramatic literature is drawn from throughout history and around the world.

We are delighted to announce the full 2017/18 Knox Theatre Presents season for next year in a new approach to season planning that includes all of the productions that will be presented throughout the year in both the Harbach and Studio Theatres with faculty and student directors working in both venues. Each play in the forthcoming season engages considerations of identity through a variety of lenses that include gender, class, religion, economy, education, sexual politics, ability, and social expectations via comedy, drama, and an original musical. Faculty designers Craig Choma and Margo Shively will again take the lead positions in designing the sets, lights, and costumes working along side student designers. Please see the back page of this playbill for the full list of shows.

Liz Carlin-Metz, Chair

### THEATRE DEPARTMENT FACULTY

Smith V. Brand Distinguished Prof. of Theatre ..... Liz Carlin Metz  
Professor of Theatre ..... Neil Blackadder  
Associate Profesoor of Theatre ..... Craig Choma  
Associate Professor of Theatre ..... Jeff Grace  
Director of Costumes & Makeup ..... Margo Shively  
Writer-in-Residence ..... Sherwood Kiraly

Knox College Theatre  
presents:

# The Importance of Being Earnest

A Trivial Comedy for Serious People

By Oscar Wilde

Directed by: Neil Blackadder  
Scenic Design: Brady Comenduley '18 & Craig Choma  
Lighting Design: Craig Choma  
Costume Design: Willa Coufal '18 & Margo Shively  
Sound Design: Maria M. Ortega '18

HARBACH THEATRE  
FORD CENTER FOR THE FINE ARTS  
May 10 - 13, 2017

Please:

No photographs, videos, texting, or recording. Turn off all cell phones, pagers, notification alerts or anything else that might emit light or sound.

## THE CAST

John Worthing.....	Padraig Sullivan
Algernon Moncrieff.....	Tristan Yi
Gwendolen Fairfax.....	Chloe Vollenweider
Cecily Cardew.....	Raven Ringe
Lady Bracknell.....	Jordan Hurst
Miss Prism.....	Sosy Fleming
Rev. Canon Chasuble.....	Parker Adams
Lane.....	Michelangelo Pori
Merriman.....	Casey Brayndick

The play is in three acts. There will be a 10-minute intermission following Act One

## SETTING

Act One: Algernon Moncrieff's flat in Half-Moon Street, London.

Acts Two and Three: the Manor House, Woolton, Hertfordshire.

## TIME

1890s

## ADMINISTRATIVE

Chairperson.....	Liz Carlin-Metz
House Manager.....	Maty Ortega
Box Office.....	Gianni Sencherey
Ushers.....	Student Volunteers
Poster.....	Evan Economos
Programs.....	Jordan Hurst and Nabiha Mansoor
Publicity.....	Peter Bailey, Cast and Crew

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Director.....	Neil Blackadder
Assistant Director.....	Peter Rule
Stage Manager.....	Emma Lipson
Assistant Stage Managers.....	Elizabeth Dehlin, Colton Denton, Natasha Caudill
Costume Designer.....	Willa Coufal
Assistant to the Costume Designer.....	Margo Shively
Hair and Make-up.....	Willa Coufal, Evelyn Young
Scene Designer.....	Craig Choma
Assistant Scene Designer.....	Brady Comenduley
Dramaturg.....	Allison Stout
Technical Director.....	Craig Choma
Assistant Technical Director.....	Marty Helms
Lighting Designer.....	Craig Choma
Master Electrician.....	Brady Comenduley
Sound Designer.....	Maty Ortega
Co Properties Designer.....	Ren Barkev
Co Properties Designer.....	Luba Liubvina
Lighting Board Operator.....	Emma Lipson
Sound Board Operator.....	Elizabeth Dehlin
Piano.....	Colton Denton
Run Crew.....	Natasha Caudill, Colton Denton, Peter Rule, Shannon Mindlin, Nijae Minter, Claire Mazius, and Jacob Elliott
Costume Studio Assistants.....	Chloe Vollenweider, Padraig Sullivan, Kristina Mengis, Willa Coufal, Peter Rule, Nola Thompson, Oliva Lemke, Ren Barkey,
Costume Shop Volunteers.....	Flora Florova, Evelyn Young
Scenery/Lighting Staff.....	Ian Tully, Ben Rezko, Brady Comenduley, Joel Schleicher, Nathan Levine, Moriah Chermak, Gregg Miller, Jack Harman, Zac Cirone, Theresa Murphy, Jennie Jeoung, Emma Lipson
Scenery/Lighting Volunteers.....	McLeod Sumner, Carly Gilbert, Mia Rousonelos, Parker Adams, Sosy Fleming, Colton Denton, Dakota Stipp, Yu Mao, Everett Thompson, Allison Stout, Nabiha Mansoor



## What Was Wilde Doing?

*The Importance of Being Earnest* is Oscar Wilde's best known play and a largely undisputed stage classic. Since the play's debut in 1895, however, critics and scholars have struggled to definitively place it within a single genre. It is most often called a comedy of

manners, or a farce, sometimes even a parody or satire. All of these labels fit certain aspects of the play, but fall short in important ways.

A farce is a comedy that aims to entertain an audience through situations that are highly exaggerated, extravagant, and thus, improbable. Plots are often incomprehensible. Farces are further characterized by physical humor, deliberate absurdity, and broadly stylized performance. *Earnest*, however, is no ordinary farcical play, in part because it is simply too clever to be just a farce. Yes, it meets much of the criteria and even makes use of farcical situations, but in the end the play is just too clever. The comedy, for the most part, comes not from action or situation, but from the dialogue. The dialogue, moreover, makes abundant use of Oscar Wilde's famous wit— a comic effect far more subtle and intellectual than in a purely farcical play.

“The real charm of the play, if it is to have charm, must be in the dialogue”  
-Oscar Wilde

If *Earnest* is not a true farce, maybe it fits better as a comedy of manners? A comedy of manners presents a fundamentally realistic world; though they may be exaggerated, any minor weakness or eccentricity of the characters is made comedic as a representation of real excesses. *Earnest* does not quite fit this genre either, the world is much too extra-rational. Wilde created a world which inverts ‘real’ values, switches up reason and unreason. Odd though it may seem to say, *Earnest* is too real to be a farce, but not real enough to be a comedy of manners.

Is *Earnest* closer to a satire of late Victorian society? There is certainly a strong current of social criticism running through the play. Jack, a paradoxical symbol of Victorian hypocrisy as a man who is neither earnest nor. *Earnest* and yet both, and Lady Bracknell's snobbery is constantly the butt of Wilde's jokes. Or is the play best defined as a parody of the popular romantic fiction of the day? Jack and Algernon are presented as clever, worldly young men typical of the time, but are actually fussy and incredibly sentimental. Gwendolen and Cecily would seem to be the archetypal proper young ladies, but are really incredible schemers who manipulate the men like chess pieces.

So, what is *The Importance of Being Earnest*? Into which category does it fit? People just can't agree. But then, audiences never really seem to mind.

-Allison Stout, Dramaturg

## WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

PARKER ADAMS (Rev. Cannon Chasuble) is a senior majoring in Creative Writing and Psychology. You may remember Parker as an Islander in *Island of Slaves* and as Lady Anne in *Richard III* at Knox College. Parker would like to thank Crystal Singletary for encouraging them to audition years ago, as well as family and friends for continued support. Parker is from Grayslake, IL.

CASEY BRAYNDICK (Merriman) is a freshman majoring in Elementary Education and minoring in Dance. This is Casey's first Knox theatre production, although she has previously been seen dancing in Terpsichore's Out of the Shadows and Kaleidoscope. She would like to thank her family and friends for always supporting her in her artistic endeavors. Casey is from Des Plaines, IL (which is a suburb of Chicago).

SOSY FLEMMING (Miss Prism) is a sophomore majoring in Creative Writing. They appeared in Studio Theater in Winter Term in "This Provincial Life" (Josie), and this is their first Knox mainstage production. They would like to thank their mom, dad, and brothers Dennis and Colin for encouraging exuberance and enthusiasm and for their support, love, and advice; L.E. and their other friends for their companionship and understanding, and the cast and crew of Earnest for making this an excellent experience. Sosa is from Lake Elmo, MN.

MICHEANGELO PORI (Lane) is a junior majoring in Creative Writing and minoring in Theater. He has previously been seen at Knox College in *American Tropical* (Sid), *Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere* (Master Longtail/Brother Sable/Ensemble), and *Basement: A Parable* (Jonah) as part of the New Plays Festival. He has also acted, directed, and written for Knox College's Playground and designed props for *A Matter of Life and Maybe Death* and *The Secret In the Wings*. He would like to thank all of his friends for their love and support during a difficult year and hopes that everyone in audience falls in love with *The Importance of Being Earnest* the same way that he did. Michelangelo is from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

RAVEN RINGE (Cecily Cardew) is a freshman with a double major in Theatre and Creative Writing. She has previously been seen in Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Siobhan), Chad Beckim's *After* (Susie), George Furth's *Company* (April), and several other pieces at West Chicago Community High School. She would like to thank everyone in her family for standing by her side, and for letting her know that if she misses the moon, she'll land in the stars. Raven is from West Chicago, IL.

PADRAIG SULLIVAN (Jack Worthing) is a senior majoring in theatre and minoring in creative writing. He's previously been seen at Knox in *Richard III* (Clarence, Lord Mayor), *Home Free!* (Lawrence) and *Pray for us, Lucifer* (Lucifer), as well working as Props Master for *The Nether*. He'd like to thank everyone involved with the show both on and offstage for to giving him the chance to end his Knox theatre career on a high note, and to share the stage one last time with so many people he's worked with through the years. Padraig is from Boston, Massachusetts

CHLOE VOLLENWEIDER (Gwendolen Fairfax): is a senior majoring in Theatre and minoring in Religious Studies. Since her first year at Knox she has worked as a teaching assistant in the Costume Shop under the direction of Margo Shively. Chloe recently costume designed *Mosque Alert*, *Neverwhere*, and *Richard III*. After graduation, Chloe will be working over the summer at Festival 56 as the Head Costume Designer and Costume Shop Manager. She has thoroughly enjoyed the last four years in the Knox College Theatre Department and would like to thank her mentors for their constant guidance. Chloe would also like to thank her friends and family for their never-ending reassurance and support. Chloe is from Kansas City.

TRISTAN YI (Algernon Moncrieff) is a senior with a major in Theatre and a minor in Literature. He has previously performed upon Knox's stages in *The Nether* (Sims/Papa), *Chaos Theory* (Seth), *Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere* (Mr. Vandemar), *The Secret in the Wings* (Ensemble), *Flop Cop* (Officer Mike Murphy), *Stop Kiss* (Detective Cole), *The Bed* (Jack), and *Maple & Vine* (Ryu). His off-campus acting credits include Ogilvie in the Prairie Players' production of *Hug It Out* (written by the brilliant Sherwood Kiraly) and the titular role in Mrs. Caruso's third-grade class's production of Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. He is infinitely grateful to his mother, his brothers, and everybody else whom he has the honor of loving. Tristan hails from Los Angeles, CA.

JORDAN HURST (Lady Bracknell) is a senior with a major in Theatre and a minor in Social Justice. She has previously performed upon Knox's stages in *The Nether* (Detective Morris), *Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere* (Hunter), *Stop Kiss* (Mrs. Winsley), *In The Next Room (or the Vibrator Play)* (Elizabeth), and *Laundry and Bourbon* (Hattie). After graduation, Jordan will be pursuing a MA in Theater at Bowling Green State University. She would like to thank her apartment mates for putting up with her year long dramatics, Tristan for always being her right hand man, and her mother for her endless love and support. Jordan calls Chicago, IL her home.

## WHO'S WHO IN THE CREATIVE TEAM

NEIL BLACKADDER (Director) has taught at Knox since 1998, in the areas of dramatic literature and theatre history, dramaturgy, and playwriting. *The Importance of Being Earnest* is the fourteenth show he has directed or co-directed in Harbach, ranging from Molière, Schiller, and Chekhov, to the college world premiere of Jamil Khoury's *Mosque Alert*. In 2008, he directed the English-language world premiere of his own translation from German of Rebekka Kricheldorf's *Rosa and Blanca*. Neil's translations have also been produced professionally in the UK and US and recognized with many grants and residencies. Neil grew up and went to university in England, and first came to the US for graduate study in Comparative Literature. He is the author of *Performing Opposition: Modern Theater and the Scandalized Audience*, and of the short play "Dad's Guns," currently being made into a short film by two Knox alums.

PETER RULE (Assistant Director) is a sophomore from Colorado Springs, Colorado, double majoring in theatre and English literature. He has performed previously as Lord Hastings in *Richard III* and as an Islander in *The Island of Slaves*. He'd like to thank Neil Blackadder for welcoming him into the production team, and Margo Shively for hiring him in her shop.

WILLA COUFAL (Costume Designer) is a Junior majoring in Theater and minoring in Creative Writing and Studio Art. She has previously been the costume designer for *The Secret In The Wings* and *The Lost Girls*- additionally, she has been a TA at the costume shop for three years and produced pieces for *Island of Slaves*, *Mosque Alert*, *The Nether*, *Richard III*, and *Pamela*. She would like to thank Margo Shively for her endless patience and her mom for pushing her along the way. Willa is from Chicago.

## CRAIG CHOMA

(Scenic Designer, Lighting Designer)

Craig is an Associate Professor of Theatre at Knox College (resident designer and technical director). Favorite Knox designs include *The Nether*, *The Secret In The Wings*, *Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere*, *Rapture*, *Blister*, *Burn*, *The Caffè Cino Project*, *In The Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, *Next Fall*, *The Green Bird*, *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Under Construction*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Lie of The Mind*, *Medea*, *Angels in America*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Rosa & Blanca*, *The Skriker*, *Noises Off*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *As You Like It*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *War and Peace*, *Arcadia* and *Macbeth*. Craig is also an inaugural member of Vitalist Theatre in Chicago, whose designs include the award winning productions of *A Passage to India* (sets) and *Mother Courage and Her Children* (sets), *Anna Karenina* (sets), *Floating Rhoda and the Glue Man* (sets), *King Lear* (lighting), *The Mill On The Floss* (set and lighting), and *the world premiere of Anung's First American Christmas* (set). Other Chicago designs include the sets for *Death and the Maiden (Timeline)*, *Pippin*, *Night Sky*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Museum*. Craig holds a BA in Theatre and Philosophy (Knox College) and MFAs in both Scenic and Lighting Design (Carnegie Mellon University). Craig thanks his lovely wife and two beautiful daughters for their boundless creativity and unconditional love.

EMMA LIPSON (Stage Manager) is a junior majoring in Theatre and minoring in Arts Administration and Business and Management. Her past stage management credits include *Einstein's Brains*, *Hug it Out*, *The Secret in the Wings*, *Island of Slaves*, *Richard III*, *Rapture Blister Burn*, *Mosque Alert*, and *The Caffè Cino Project*. This summer she will be interning at the Eugene O'Neill in Box Office and House Management. Emma would like to thank her friends for forgiving her for never leaving CFA and her parents for supporting her theatre dreams with chocolate covered raisins. Emma is from Norwalk, CT.

COLTON DENTON (Assistant Stage Manager) is a freshman at Knox. He plans on getting a major in Political Science and a double minor in German and Music. He worked on shows throughout his high school career, primarily building the sets for mainstage productions. He was an ASM for Knox's Studio Theatre production of *A Matter of Life (And Maybe Death)* in the fall and is excited to continue his career in stage management. He'd like to thank his friends and family for the support they've given him throughout his career. He is originally from Phoenix, Arizona.

NATASHA CAUDILL (Assistant Stage Manager) is a first year working towards a major in American Studies with minors in Business and History. She has previously assistant stage managed *The Nether* here at Knox. She would like to personally thank Emma for berating her to write this bio. Natasha is from Memphis, Tennessee.

MARGO SHIVELY (Assistant Costume Designer) Began her career in the fashion industry after graduating from the Art Institute of Chicago. She interned with Oleg Cassini and designed and freelanced for several years before coming to Knox to teach costume design. In her thirty years at Knox, Margo has designed - more frequently co-designed with students - a number of plays. She has also designed for the Black Hills Playhouse in Custer, South Dakota and is a regular designer and consultant for Vitalist Theatre Company in Chicago where she has been actively involved since its first production of *The Mill On The Floss* in 1997. She is an active member of the U.S Institute for Theatre Technology, participating in symposiums on design and curriculum across the country. Her students have gone on to pursue Master's degrees at Yale, Carnegie Mellon, University of Connecticut at Storrs, and The University of Texas at Austin. Of her many experiences, she is most grateful for, and proud of, the opportunity to work with students who share her passion for design. Margo is from Galesburg, Illinois.

MARIA M. ORTEGA (Sound designer), better known as Maty, is a junior majoring in Biology and minoring in Playwriting. They have been involved in staged readings on Knox Campus for Playground, New Plays Festivals and We're Not Playing. They would like to thank their family for supporting every impulse hobby they throw themselves into and Dakota Stupp for his amazing sound design knowledge. Maty is from Chicago, Illinois.

REN BARKEY (Co-Properties Designer) is a senior majoring in Environmental Studies and Theatre. They work in the costume shop, have done costume design for *Sacrifice*, and were the costume crew chief for *Secret in the Wings*. Ren has acted in Playground, New Plays Festival, and *Neverwhere*; they have directed *Trinity Rises* and for Playground. They were also the properties master for *Island of Slaves* and *Richard III* and are the dramaturg/program design intern for International Voices Project in Chicago. Ren is the publicity chair for TAB and is from Des Moines, Iowa.

LUBA LIUBVINA (Co- Properties Designer) is a freshman planning on majoring in Studio Art. *The Importance of Being Earnest* is her first production experience at Knox. She would like to thank the production team, especially Neil Blackadder, Emma Lipson and Ren Barkey for being patient in introducing her to theatre. Luba is from Moscow, Russia.

BRADY COMENDULEY (Assistant Set Designer/Master Electrician) is a junior majoring in Theatre and minoring in Educational Policy Studies. This is his first time set designing for a production and he is very excited for this opportunity. His Assistant Stage Management credits include: *Crumble (Lay Me Down, Justin Timberlake), The Clean House, and The Secret in the Wings*. His stage management credits include: *The Lost Girls, Basement; a parable, Chaos Theory, Richard III, and Bea and May*. Brady would like to thank Oakton Reynolds and Emily Ioppolo for always being his guides and his family for continual support. Brady is from Berkeley, IL.

ELIZA DEHLIN (Assistant Stage Manager) is a first year with an undeclared major in International Relations. This is her first time being involved in Knox theatre, but she does have past experience with stage management in high school, including Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, George Bernard Shaw's *You Never Can Tell*, and (most interestingly) Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. She would like to thank all of the wonderful theatre people for accepting her into their community, and teaching her the ways of college theatre. Eliza is from Viroqua, Wisconsin.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Mia Rousonelos  
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Jeff Douglas  
Tanna Cullen  
Caroline Foulk  
Ben Rezko  
Ian Tully  
Gregg Miller  
Nicholas Frankel  
Uncle Billy's Bakery