

Est. 1995
BIG DAWG

PRODUCTIONS
A 501(c)(3) Non-Profit

By Arrangement With
 **DPS**
Dramatist Play Service

In The Ruth & Bucky Stein Studio Theatre

Dearlly Departed

A SOUTHERN FUNERAL FARCE

Written by David Bottrell and Jessie Jones

RIP

BUD TURPIN

MEAN & SURLY

Directed By
Steve Vernon

Starring
Randy Davis
Vanessa Welch
Benjamin Thomas-Reid
Susan Auten
La'Tuan Dupra
Paula Davis
Steve Rassin
Cierra Peterkin
Maria-Luisa Winslow
Craig Myers
James Bowling



February 8th - 18th 2024
Thursday-Saturday - 7:30 | Sunday Matinée - 3pm

See Our Full Season
BigDawgProductions.org

Tickets
ThalianHall.org

Big Dawg Productions

is proud to present

DEARLY DEPARTED

By David Bottrell and Jessie Jones

Produced with kind permission by Dramatist Play Service

Director.....Steve Vernon
Stage Manager.....Riley Farmer
Set Design.....Terry Collins
Costume Design.....Naomi Nason
Light Design.....Shane Jackson
Visuals Design.....Chad Hsu
Sound Design.....Steve Vernon
Board Operators.....Riley Farmer, Tyrell L. Cox

Setting

In and around the towns of Lula and Timson, somewhere below the
Mason-Dixon Line, in 1991.

Starring:

CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

La'Tuan Dupra.....Raynelle
Craig Meyers.....Bud, Norval, Clyde
Paula Davis.....Marguerite
Steve Rassin.....Royce
Vanessa Welch.....Lucille
Randy Davis.....Ray-Bud
Susan Auten.....Suzanne
Ben Thomas-Reid.....Junior
Cierra Lataisha Peterkin.....Delightful, Nadine
James Bowling.....Rev. Hooker
Maria-Luisa Winslow.....Veda, Juanitan

La'Tuan Dupra (RAYNELLE) expresses gratitude for a career that has afforded her the opportunity to travel and appear productions including *Clybourne Park*, *For Colored Girls*, and *Praying Mantis* and most recently, *School Girls: The African Mean Girls* and *Women Playing Hamlet*. Although her love for the theatre remains, it's her four phenomenally fan-ta-bu-lous daughters that make her heart do a standing ovation. La'Tuan is ecstatic to be back in Wilmington working with Steve, Big Dawg Productions and such a talented cast and crew.

Craig Myers (BUD/NORVAL/CLYDE) This is Craig's 9th production with Big Dawg. He performed in *Harvey*, *Mornings at Seven*, *The Mousetrap*, *The Birds Attack*, *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *The Laramie Project* and *Twelve Angry Men*. He has also performed in multiple productions at Thalian Hall and theaters in Albuquerque, New Mexico where he lived until moving to Wilmington in 2011. With his wife Carol he produced, directed, and performed for The Mystery Cafe interactive dinner theater for 18 years.

Paula Davis (MARGUERITE) This is Paula's third Big Dawg production and she is incredibly honored to be working with such a stellar group of actors and crew. She has appeared in numerous theater, film and tv productions through the years. Many thanks to Steve for his creativity and insightfulness and to her fiancé Jim for his unwavering support.

Steve Rassin (ROYCE) is happy to be back on stage with Big Dawg! You may have seen Steve in other productions in-town, or doing comedy improv, or in the grocery store. Currently, he is on stage, will be, or just left. Steve says, Thanks to the cast, Steve, Riley, and all the crew for making this a great time! To Creed, ABMLBYNMW! To Christina, Alottle! To you, thanks for coming and enjoy!

Vanessa Welch (LUCILLE) is delighted to share the stage with this awful sweet lot, and tickled pink to play this role opposite her real life husband once again. You may have seen her in other local productions including: **The Book of Will**, **Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol**, **Noises Off**, and **The Dog Logs**. You may have also seen her in pajamas at your local grocery purchasing snacks to keep two insatiable growing boys happy while Mom and Dad rehearsed. Vanessa would like to thank the two aforementioned boys for their patience, support, and consistently well-timed wit. Vanessa would also like to thank YOU for attending this performance and choosing live theatre. Y'all have fun now!

Randy Davis (RAY-BUD) is on the Big Dawg stage yet again. He promises he's taking a show off soon. He's happy to be back in Lula for the third time, having previously played Royce and Ray-Bud in different productions of this show over the past couple decades. He's enjoying playing a loving couple with his actual wife, Vanessa. They are most often seen onstage together as a crotchety, old dead guy and the hell sprite sent to torture him in the afterlife. Now, sit back, relax and let's get this guy in the ground.

Susan Auten (SUZANNE) is excited as always to be working with Big Dawg again and this wonderful cast and crew. She's been doing theatre for over 20 years and thanks YOU, the audience, for supporting local theatre so we can continue to do what we love! Just stay away from K-Mart parking lots!

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RIGHT IN THE EYE
Live Movie Concert of Georges Méliès' Films
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MAR 24TH

BLOOD DONE SIGN MY NAME
A MIKE WILEY PRODUCTION
APR 16TH
HENRY D. MARROW JR.
NORTH CAROLINA
PVT US ARMY
VIETNAM

Box Office - 910.632.2285 - **ThalianHall.org**

Ben Thomas-Reid (JUNIOR) was last seen on stage in **The Philadelphia Story**. He'd like to thank his husband, Matthew, for taking care of bed and bath time for their son, Bash, while he went and hung out with his 'other' family. Thanks also to Steve for allowing me to play this deeply flawed but funny character.

Cierra Lataisha Peterkin (DELIGHTFUL/NADINE) is an actress based in Wilmington NC. Cierra has been in previous shows such as **Am I Next?: Voices from Wilmington** and **The Tempest** both displayed at UNCW. She is making her Big Dawg Productions debut and she hopes that everyone enjoys the show.

James Bowling (REVEREND HOOKER) - James is proud to be working with Big Dawg again. His credits include **Waiting For Godot**, **The Dog Logs**, **Curious Incident** and **Book of Will** for Big Dawg. He has been blessed with working with this incredible cast and thanks Steve for the chance to have a good time on stage. Past projects have included directing **Barefoot in the Park** and performing in **Rock Of Ages**, **Elf**, and playing Willy Lowman in **Death of A Salesman**. Thanks to Joel and the kids for letting him come out and play.

Maria-Luisa Winslow (VEDA/JUANITA) returns to Big Dawg for the second time and is thrilled to be back. She also loves to play at Brunswick Little Theatre in Southport. Much gratitude to Steve Vernon for the opportunity to be a part of this wonderfully zany cast and crew, and to her incredibly supportive family. Thank you for coming to our show!

Riley Farmer (Stage Manager) has never died. She has previously stage managed **Women Playing Hamlet**, **Dog Logs**, and **Waiting for Godot**.

Special Thanks:

Terri Hsu, Lee Lowrimore and Dorothy Rankin, Holli Saperstein, Lula's A Pub, James Bowling, Stephanie Scheu Aman, the Staff and Volunteers of Thalian Hall Center for the Performing Arts, and YOU.

Extra Special Thanks to All of our family members, friends, employers, pets, creditors, responsibilities, financial obligations and significant others for allowing us time and space to create and play.



Thanks to a successful partnership with MarMaxMedia, Big Dawg Productions is now an Off-Broadway Producer, investing in new shows to bring straight to Wilmington.

Our first two Off-Broadway plays are by New York Times bestselling author, Tawni O'Dell, entitled **Windows** and **Pay the Writer**. **Windows** will open Off-Broadway and in Wilmington in February 2024.

Pay the Writer has completed it's Off-Broadway debut and is currently being adapted in preperation for it's Broadway premier in the fall of 2024.

We look forward to bringing these shows and more from Off-Broadway to Wilmington in the years to come.

Big Dawg's Mission

To produce entertaining, thought-provoking, and socially responsible theater, with an emphasis on involving youth and the community in the performing arts.

Board Of Directors

Jeff Loy - President
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La'Tuan Dannels - Interim Secretary
Chad Hsu, Terri Hsu, Dan Levine, Holli Sapperstein

Steve Vernon - Artistic Director

Get Involved

If you are interested in becoming a board member of Big Dawg Productions send a message to BigDawgPro@gmail.com

A BIG THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

Big Dawg Productions extends its sincere thanks to all those who donated to us in the last year. Big Dawg Productions is a 501c3 non-profit organization, every dollar supports local theatre, local actors and crews, and allows us to continue bringing unique and thought provoking (or at least funny) theatre to the stage and expand our community impact with new programs.

Grant Sponsors - The Wilson Center at Cape Fear Community College, The Landfall Foundation

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Beth Bell, Griffin & Rowan Davis, Paula Davis, Dawg Lovers - a group of dedicated followers, Mary Anne Deaton, Lorraine O. Hiester, Michael Lauricella & Andy McVey, Dan Levine, Lee Lowrimore & Dorothy Rankin, Nancy Nail, Steve Rassin, Richard Trubia, Katherine Vernon, Blanche Williamson, Charles Wezwick, David Zuckerman

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AND A HEARTFELT THANK YOU to the various government and non-governmental agencies for their grants and loans that helped sustain us through the pandemic.



Meet Our New Poster Dog For The 2024 Season!

Say Hello To Mayzie!

Special thanks to Mayzie's human, Blanche Williamson, for her generous ~~bribe~~ support of our First Stop Series, a series dedicated to bringing new plays to Off-Broadway and Wilmington stages, and her continuing support of Big Dawg Productions and all of our weirdness.

BIG DAWG PRODUCTIONS PROUDLY PRESENTS OUR 2024 SEASON!

All productions will take place here, in The Ruth & Bucky Stein Studio Theatre, at Historic Thalian Hall. All plays and dates subject to change.

Wlnsdows

by Tawni O'Dell

April 18-21, 25-28

A series of monologues and short scenes that explore the experiences of people from all walks of life during the initial shutdowns caused by the COVID pandemic in 2020. At times heartbreaking, humorous, thought provoking and hopeful, this play manages to capture the best in each of us during a time of uncertainty and isolation. A triumphant stage experience!

***Closing the Distance** is being presented by special arrangement with the play's author, Ms. Tawni O'Dell. Such arrangement is due to Big Dawg's support of the play as it embarks on its debut in NYC in February of 2024. **Closing the Distance** will be premiering at the Lincoln Center in February under the title **Windows**.

It should be noted that no other production of this play has been licensed to any venue anywhere, or with the expectation that such license will happen in the immediate future. We are most grateful to Ms. O'Dell for her reciprocating our support of her work and allowing Big Dawg to deliver a first look to our audience.

2024 Big Dawg Youth Playwright Festival-Puppy Tales

May 23-26, May 30-June 2

With support from The Landfall Foundation, Big Dawg is proud to bring back this event that focuses on original works written by local youth between the ages of 12 and 18. Works will focus on relationships with pets, and the event will feature partnerships with local animal rescue groups!

July 18-21, 25-28 TBA

Pay the Writer

by Tawni O'Dell

Aug. 29-Sept 1, 5-8

Pay The Writer is a new comedy-drama from New York Times Best Selling Author Tawni O'Dell. Focusing on the complicated relationship between a legendary literary agent and his best friend-turned-most-successful client, this dynamic and socially intuitive play explores how an artist's life is controlled by their calling and talent. Fresh off of the acclaimed Off Broadway debut from 2023!

***Pay the Writer** is being presented by special arrangement with the author, Tawni O'Dell, due to Big Dawg's support and participation in the NY debut of this play. Presently, Ms. O'Dell is preparing a rewrite of the material you will be seeing in preparation for the play's move to Broadway in the Fall of 2024.

Night of the Living Dead

by George Romero, adapted by Chase Harrison
Oct. 17-20, 24-27

The film that started it all, adapted for the stage! The story follows seven people trapped in a farmhouse in rural Pennsylvania, under assault by reanimated corpses. Multiple critics have voted ***Night of the Living Dead*** as the most influential and groundbreaking pieces of horror of all time!

Dec. 12-15, 19-22 TBA

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Become an underwriter of Big Dawg Productions, get the word out about your business, and support local theatre.

Contact: Zach Peschl, Marketing Director, at
Zach@Peschl.us

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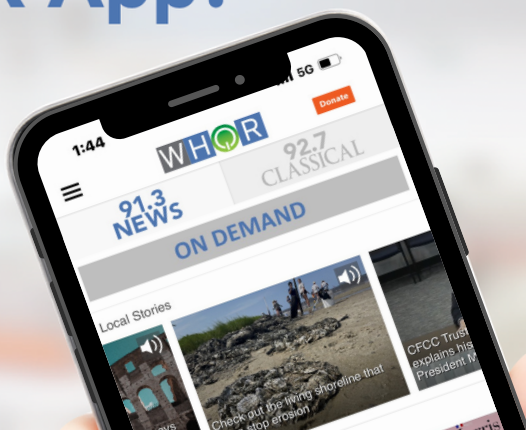
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APR 5-14
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