

# The Explorers Club

By Nell Benjamin



Directed By  
Holli Saperstein

Starring  
Beau Mumford  
Tamica Katzmann  
Neil Henderson  
Blair Houtz  
Jason Bowers  
Trevor Tackett  
Aidan Van Nynatten  
James Bowling  
Jeff Nason

August 13-23  
Thurs-Sat 7:30 - Sun 3pm  
[BigDawgTheatre.org](http://BigDawgTheatre.org)

# ***The Explorers Club***

Written by Nell Benjamin

Directed by Holli Saperstein

## **Production Staff**

|                               |                         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Rehearsal Stage Manager.....  | Steve Vernon            |
| Production Stage Manager..... | Yahui Liao              |
| Costume Design.....           | Dori Nason              |
| Sound Design.....             | Steve Vernon            |
| Light Design.....             | Bryce O'Dell            |
| Deck Chief.....               | Tyrell Cox              |
| Board Operator.....           | Yahui Liao              |
| Set Design.....               | Randy Davis             |
| Set Construction.....         | Randy Davis, Donna Troy |

## **Cast**

|                                            |                    |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Lucius Fretway.....                        | Beau Mumford       |
| Phyllida Spott-Hume/Countess Glamorgan.... | Tamica Katzmann    |
| Harry Percy.....                           | Neil Henderson     |
| Luigi.....                                 | Blair Houtz        |
| Professor Cope.....                        | Trevor Tackett     |
| Professor Walling.....                     | Jason Bowers       |
| Professor Sloana.....                      | James Bowling      |
| Sir Bernard Humphries.....                 | Jeff Nason         |
| Irish Assassin/Beebe.....                  | Aidan Van Nynatten |

## **Setting**

London, 1879. The prestigious Explorers Club is in crisis: their acting president wants to admit a woman, and their bartender is terrible.

Approximate Runtime: Act I ~ 45 minutes, Act II ~ 40 minutes

There will be a 15 minute intermission.

## **Special Thanks**

Topher Davis & LucyBeth Nieves-Arriba, Jason Aycock and Opera House Theater Company, Terry Collins, Stephanie Scheau Aman, Lula's A Pub, Ned & Arleen Rhodes, Cyndi & Ron McNeil, Robert Zaytoun, George Keller, Hugh MacRae III, Mary Boney Denison & John Clark, Charles Calhoun, Richard Trubia, Mary Baggett, Charlotte Davis, Peggy Baddour.

## Biographies

**Beau Mumford (Lucius Fretway)** is excited to be returning to "The Explorers Club" after its initial 2019 adventure. He is a local actor and lighting designer. Recent acting credits include Oz and others in "Come From Away," Billy Foster in "Santa Claus Conquers the Martians," and Schroeder in "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown." He would like to thank his wonderful cats and his amazing fiancé for their support.

**Tamica Katzmann (Phyllida Spotte- Hume/Countess Glamorgan)** is elated to be the only woman within a jungle of men... again. She was also the lone woman in "A Few Good Men", which got her a 2026 Wilmington Theatre Award nomination for Outstanding Lead Actress. Tamica would like to thank Ben and Leelu for holding down the hut while she left to find a lost city.

**Neil Henderson (Sir Harry Percy)** is a newcomer to the Wilmington theater scene and a graduate of the American Conservatory Theater's Advanced Training Program. Previous roles include Tom Joad in "The Grapes of Wrath", George in "Our Town", Orsino in "Twelfth Night", Father Jack in "Dancing at Lughnasa", and Guy Jones in "A Chorus of Disapproval". After an intermission that ran a few decades longer than planned, he is thrilled, and mildly alarmed, to be back onstage, where he has happily discovered that the nerves and the half-forgotten lines are exactly where he left them. He thanks his wife, Brittany, and his son, Holden, for their patience, their encouragement, and their willingness to run lines at odd hours. He is grateful to his acting teacher, Elizabeth Becka, and to director Holli Saperstein for taking a chance on him. This performance is dedicated to his dear friend Rachel Hemingway, who urged him back into the light and is surely watching from the best seat in the house. To science!

**Blair Houtz (Luigi)** grew up around Raleigh, NC and has been acting since a child. He had taken a break from theater while in college pursuing a degree in English/Literary Studies at UNCW. From graduating college until last year Blair has invested in time cofounding a local video production company (Boot Scrap) and working for various nonprofits engaged with food security and youth development in low resource communities. Last year, Blair decided to return to the stage with the Cape Fear Shakespeare's rendition of "MacBeth" playing the

role of Ross. For this role and the role of Selwin months later in Big Dawg Productions' "Mercury", Blair was nominated for Best Newcoming Actor in the Wilmington Theater Awards. This year he once again acted for Cape Fear Shakespeare's summer show playing Robin Goodfellow in "Midsummer Night's Dream" and again has now returned to the Bucky Stein Theater for Big Dawg. When he's not on the stage you can find Blair at One Love Tennis Academy where he is the Director of Operations or at Fuzzy Needle Books & Records where he sometimes works.

**Trevor Tackett (Professor Cope)** is thrilled to be creeping out of his theatrical hibernation and back onto the stage with Big Dawg, marking his first production in nearly six years (yes, he can count). After half a decade of just paying bills and having evenings available, he's delighted to trade it all in for the glorious chaos once more. Endless thanks to Holli and Steve for dusting him off, and reminding him that fun is, in fact, allowed (sometimes).

**Jason Bowers (Professor Walling)** is excited to be taking his second expedition to the Wilmington stages with Big Dawg Productions, after appearing as Professor Stanley Southard in "The Hermit of Fort Fisher" earlier this season. He got his theatrical start acting and writing in the frozen northern wastelands of Ithaca New York as a Kommittee (yes with a "K") member of the historic Risley Theatre at Cornell University. After a few years as a professional stand-in and background actor with numerous local film projects he is excited to once again appear with Big Dawg at Thalian, even as he fears being typecasted as Professors.

**James Bowling (Professor Sloane)** is proud to be working with Big Dawg again. Thanks to Joel and the kids for letting him come out and play.

**Jeff Nason (Sir Bernard Humphries)** is excited to be working with Holli Saperstein and the amazing cast of this show. Jeff is blessed by the love and support of his amazingly talented wife Dori. This is his second Big Dawg show and he promises that it is only a coincidence that family members costumed both of those productions

**Aidan Van Nynatten (Irish Assassin/Beebe)** is stoked to be back with Big Dawg to kick heads and look cool doing it. He has nothing more to add to this bio but feels like it should be at least three sentences. Thanks for reading.

**Holli Saperstein (Director)** is an actor, director and producer. She has been seen on stage as well as directing shows for Big Dawg, Opera House Theatre Company and Panache Productions. She is thrilled to have had the opportunity to direct this show not once but twice with different casts. Nell Benjamin's clever dialogue and wonderful characters have made it a pleasure.

### **Big Dawg's Mission**

To produce entertaining, thought provoking, and socially responsible theatre, with and emphasis on involoving youth and the community in the performing arts.

### **Board Of Directors**

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| Zach Peschl.....                             | Vice President    |
| Chad Hsu.....                                | Treasurer         |
| Courtney Harding.....                        | Secertary         |
| Jennifer Cox, Jeff Loy, Benjamin Thomas Reid |                   |
| Steve Vernon.....                            | Artistic Director |

AND

Our small, but dedicated group, of community advisors and volunteers who work in the community to support the company in fundraising, and outreach.

### **Get Involved**

If you are interested in becoming a board member or volunteering with Big Dawg Productions send a message to

***BigDawgPro@gmail.com***

# **A Big Thank You To Our Amazing Donors & Sponsors!**

Big Dawg Productions extends its sincere thanks to all those who donated to us in the last year. 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 Arts Council of Wilmington/NHC, The Landfall Foundation, The Wilson Center at Cape Fear Community College

## **Executive Producers**

Dr. LucyBeth Nieves Arriba & Topher Davis, R E Frerichs MD & Tony Harrelson, Cynthia McNeil, Ned & Arleen Rhodes

## **Producers**

Charles Calhoun, Mary Boney Denison & John Clark, Dan Levine, Hugh MacRae III, Robert Zayton

## **Director's Circle**

Maureen & Paul Baron, Mark Basquill, Beth Bell, David & Laura Kay Berry, Griffin & Rowan Davis, Charlotte Davis, Paula Davis, Dawg Lovers a group of dedicated followers, Mary Anne Deaton, Lorraine O. Hiester, Michael Lauricella & Andy McVey, L&L Rentals, Lee Lowrimore & Dorothy Rankin, Nancy Nail, Steve Rassin, Richard Trubia, Shirley Valentine, Katherine Vernon, Blanche Williamson, Charles & Michael Wezwick, David Zuckerman

## **Benefactors**

Peggy Baddour, Juli Rehder & Mary Baggett, Aaron Carlson, Louise & Steve Coggins, Wanda & Ron Copley, Meg Davenport, Karen Day, Amy and Mark Deloach, Emmett & Hubert Haywood, Jon Fycyk & Zach Peschl, Sonda Jaffe, Elle Lafleur, Ann Longley, Tracy Pope & John Michael Mielcarski, Dr. Jeff Turner, Chuck Whitlock

## **Patrons**

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**October 15-18, 22-25**

***Chemical Imbalance: A Jekyll and Hyde Play***

by Lauren Wilson

A fastpaced, wickedly funny reimagining of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic tale. In this contemporary adaptation, Dr. Henry Jekyll is a brilliant but socially awkward psychiatrist who experiments with a revolutionary drug designed to "cure" the darker impulses of his most troubled patient—himself. When the volatile and uninhibited Edward Hyde emerges, chaos erupts in a blur of mistaken identities, outrageous encounters, and razorsharp comedy. Blending gothic suspense with laugh-out-loud farce, ***Chemical Imbalance*** explores the duality within us all—proving that sometimes the scariest monster is the one we've tried hardest to suppress.

"An evening of exhilarating entertainment... An inventive, original comedy of horrors."

— San Francisco Examiner

"The humor is nonstop, but cannot cover the highly sinister aspects of the plot..."

— San Francisco Bay Times



Theatre for All is a 501(c)(3) non-profit company whose mission is to empower people with disabilities, nurture community connections and overturn stereotypes through the performing arts.

**TheatreForAll.org**

**December 10-13, 17-20**  
***Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol***

By Tom Mula

“Marley was dead, to begin with...” —and what happens to Ebenezer Scrooge’s mean, sour, prune-y old business partner after that? Chained and shackled, Marley is condemned to a hellish eternity. He’s even given his own private tormentor: a malicious little hellsprite who thoroughly enjoys his work. Desperate, Marley accepts his one chance to free himself: To escape his own chains, he must first redeem Scrooge. So begins a journey of laughter and terror, redemption and renewal, during which Scrooge’s heart, indeed, is opened; but not before Marley—in this irreverent, funny and deeply moving story—discovers his own.

“Of all the holiday shows dotting the theatrical landscape, none shines brighter than Jacob Marley’s Christmas Carol.”

**– The Life**

“Delectably zany... inspired theatre... gives the audience cause to ache, and to laugh, and in the end, to exalt.”

**– City Beat**

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Jacob Marley's

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Christmas Carol

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