Please join us for our 2017-18 Season!

*The Mystery of Love and Sex*
by Bathsheba Doran
September 27-October 2, 2017

*Hair*
Book & Lyrics by James Rado and Gerome Ragni, Music by Galt MacDermot
October 4-8, 2017

*Steel Magnolias*
by Robert Harling
November 1-5, 2017

Winthrop Dance Theatre Concert
November 9-12, 2017

Fall One-Act Festival
November 17-19, 2017

Senior Choreography Showcase
December 1-3, 2017

*Precious Little*
by Madeleine George
February 7-11, 2018

*Charm*
by Kathleen Cahill
February 14-18, 2018

*The Commedia Rapunzel*
Book, Music and Lyrics by Sam LaFrage
March 28-April 1, 2018

*TBA*
April 4-8, 2018

Spring One-Act Festival
April 13-15, 2018

Student Choreography Showcase
April 20-22, 2018
The Merchant of Venice
By William Shakespeare
Adapted by Sarah Provencal

Cast

Antonio    Luna Mackie*
Salarino   Lauren Roberts*
Salerio    Caitlyn Bryant*
Bassanio  Andrew Nelson White*
Lorenzo    Taylor Neal
Gratiano   Hailee Beltzhoover
Portia     Caitlin Byrne*
Nerissa    Stephanie Seabrooks*
Servant to Portia, Balthasar
Portia Understudy Natalie McCravy
Shylock    Juri Watson*
Launcelot  Emma Townsend
Gobbo/Duke  Caleb Moody
Jessica    Ava Furr
Morocco/Tubal  Brianna Young
Arragon    Kareem Wilson*
Servant to Antonio/Jailer/Clerk  David Frazier

Please be aware that herbal cigarettes will be used in this performance.

In compliance with Winthrop University policy, we ask smokers to use the designated area across the driveway from the front of Johnson Hall.

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

Thank you to our 2016-2017 scholarship donors!

Endowed & Restricted Scholarship Supporters

Carolina Copy Cats ~ June McDuffee
Russell Luke and Janet Gray ~ Blair Beasley Directing
John Egbert ~ Lyssa Rauch Memorial Scholarship
Martie Curran ~ Martie Curran Endowed Scholarship
Todd Leger & Holly Rauch ~ Lyssa Rauch Memorial Scholarship

Producer’s Circle

Little Chapel Club
Spratt & Sandra White
Linda and Chick Williams
Eric & Elaine Whitton Davis
In memory of Mickey Davis
David Wohl & Sherry Simmers
Christine Fisher
Dan & Laura Mahony

Cornerstone Club
Hugh Barnett Jr.
Winthrop Softball Coaches

Friends
Ruth L. Greer
Lynn and Clarence Hornsby
Lucy McDow
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J. Boyd Fisher
Polly Ford
Scott Gru-Bell
Brooke Fradd
Brenda Floyd

Garnet and Gold Club
Martie Curran
Hannalie & Red Ferguson
Scott & Shawn Price
Associate
Dr. Jane LaRoche
Scene Studio Assistants
Aisha Addison*, Mariah Barrie, Brandy Brogden, Alexa Cibbarelli*, Jobina Cummings, Brian Drescher*, Madia Medico*, Stephanie Schley*,

Scenic Construction/Lighting Crew
Karlie Brown, Ryan Hilton, Ashley Jensen, Maggie Shaw, Cindy Stowe

Costume Studio Assistants
Lauren Landers*, Zachary Morrison, Sarah Stewart, Cindy Stowe, La’Raine Turlington

Costume Construction Crew
Ke’Shawna Brown, Emily Campbell, Dylan Carpenter*, Alexa Cibbarelli*, Megan Edwards, Shelby Lewis, Phylisaba Mace*, Luna Mackie*, Melanie Magee

Box Office Staff

House Manager
Dani Lilley*, Phylisaba Mace*, Garrett Whiffen*

Graphic Designer
Michael Petersheim

*Denotes membership in Alpha Psi Omega, the National Honorary Theatre Society

Synopsis: Bassanio needs a loan of three thousand ducats in order to woo a wealthy heiress named Portia. Initially, Bassanio turns to his merchant friend Antonio for help. However, Antonio is unable to provide the loan because all of his money is tied up in investments: ships at sea, to be exact. Bassanio and Antonio pay a visit to Shylock, a Jewish money lender. Shylock hates Antonio due to Antonio’s prior anti-Semitic actions towards him. Nevertheless, Shylock agrees to Bassanio’s loan request on one condition. If the loan is not repaid in time, Shylock will take a pound of Antonio’s flesh. Antonio secures the deal and assures the reluctant Bassanio that his ships will return to Venice in time. Also in Venice, Lorenzo has fallen for Jessica, who happens to be Shylock’s daughter. They make plans for her to steal her father’s money, dress up as a boy, and run away from her father’s house. This also means, since Jessica is Jewish, that she will convert to Christianity in order to marry Lorenzo. In the meantime, Portia is visited by many suitors who have traveled across the land to pursue her love. Before he died, Portia’s father created a test. Anyone who wants to marry Portia must take this test, choosing from three caskets that have riddles written on top of them. If they guess right, they can marry Portia. If they are wrong, they must immediately leave and never marry anyone. We see two suitors guess wrong, and then Bassanio arrives with his friend Gratiano. He guesses the right casket, much to Portia’s relief. It also comes to light that Gratiano has been wooing Nerissa, Portia’s best friend. Portia and Nerissa give Bassanio and Gratiano rings as symbols of their love, making them swear to never part with them. The four of them are celebrating their new engagement when Salerio arrives with a letter from Antonio. Antonio has heard that all of his ships have been wrecked at sea, and he must now pay the fine of a pound of his flesh to Shylock. Bassanio and Gratiano immediately leave for Belmont, to be with Antonio during a trial before the Duke of Venice, as Shylock is indeed enacting the penalty of a pound of flesh as revenge for the racism and injustice that he has faced. Portia decides to attend the trial herself. She dresses as a lawyer, Nerissa as her clerk, so that no one will recognize them—and they dress as men so that they will be listened to and respected. Can Portia navigate the law and save the day? Who gets to define justice? And who has the right to take revenge?
Directors Notes:

All plays have problems. Only a few receive the special distinction of being one of Shakespeare’s Problem Plays. *The Merchant of Venice* holds this distinction. The ending is problematic, injustice is unresolved, and though the privileged few are dishonest and abusive, they end up back on top. Leaving us without answers, this unsettling play fits all too well within our current cultural climate. I am humbled to present this story, and even more humbled by the dedication, talent, and generous spirits of these students. I admit that lately I’ve struggled to find hope—in theatre, education, and in the country. But these students have changed that. They give me hope.

Enjoy. Or don’t. It’s a problem play, so it may leave you with…?