

**DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE**  
**2000-2001 SEASON**

**ASSASSINS**

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Book by John Weidman

Based on an original idea by Charles Gilbert  
Sirote Theatre, October 25 through 29, 2000

**THE HOT L BALTIMORE**

By Lanford Wilson

Odess Theatre, November 7 though 12, 2000

**THE IMPORTANCE  
OF BEING EARNEST**

By Oscar Wilde

Sirote Theatre, February 21 through 25, 2001

**FLYIN' WEST**

By Pearl Cleage

Odess Theatre, May 1 through 6, 2001

**A MAN'S A MAN**

By Bertolt Brecht

Sirote Theatre, May 16 through 20, 2001

The University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Department of Theatre  
at the Morris K. Sirote Theatre  
in the Alys Robinson Stephens Performing Arts Center

**ASSASSINS**

music and lyrics by  
Stephen Sondheim

book by  
John Weidman

ASSASSINS is based on an original idea by  
Charles Gilbert, Jr.

directed by  
Will York



## **A Note from the Department Chair**

As you sit in this wonderful space awaiting the start of the play, I ask you to consider four principles which are at the foundation of a university theatre:

- This theatre is our laboratory in which students explore and refine the many skills involved in our craft and strive to create a work of art. It is the place for them to test the limits of their skills and to take artistic risks.
- The play you are about to see was selected first and foremost for its educational opportunities. It is our goal to expose our students to great works from throughout theatre history.
- The actors you will see will be predominantly students. They will frequently be cast in roles in which their race, gender or age might at first seem inappropriate, but which provide an appropriate artistic challenge.
- Whenever we have a student ready to be tested by a full production, you will see student design work.

And with these principles fully embraced, we strive to create work of high quality and integrity; work which shall be deserving of your attention and praise.

*Marc Powers*

### **Department of Theatre Supporters**

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# KENNEDY CENTER AMERICAN COLLEGE THEATER FESTIVAL™

*Presented and Produced by the*

**John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts**

*Supported in Part by*

**The Kennedy Center Corporate Fund**

**The US Department of Education**

**Delta Airlines**

**The National Committee for the Performing Arts**

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KC/ACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KC/ACTF representative, and certain students are selected to participate in KC/ACTF programs involving awards, scholarships, and special grants for actors, playwrights, designers, and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for inclusion at the KC/ACTF regional festival and can also be considered for invitation to the KC/ACTF national festival at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC in the spring of 2001.

Last year more than 1000 productions and 19,000 students participated in the American College Theater Festival nationwide. By entering this production, our department is sharing in the KC/ACTF goals to help college theater grow and to focus attention on the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

## *DIRECTOR'S NOTES*

If I were asked to make a list of the people who have most influenced the 20<sup>th</sup> century American musical theatre, Stephen Sondheim would be at the top. His name brings images of SWEENEY TODD, SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE, INTO THE WOODS, the lyrics for WEST SIDE STORY and GYPSY, and many others. Although several of his works have touched on political issues none has invaded America and the American Dream with the force of ASSASSINS.

ASSASSINS is not a mainstream musical. There isn't a love story. In fact there isn't really any story line at all. It is probably best described as being episodic or as a simple musical revue. It does contain humor, but after we laugh it expects us to ask ourselves why we laughed. It asks us to look at our culture in a way that sometimes is uncomfortable. We are placed in the position of watching events happen that we accept in our society only from the position of intellectual knowledge and not from the hideous experience of the actual event.

By looking at 9 Presidential assassins and would be assassins brought together in a world created by Sondheim, ASSASSINS explores the American beliefs that "all men are created equal" and have the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." What can a man do when failure happens in a country that espouses these rights? In a country that views failure as one of the greatest and most vile of sins. Although most who fail seek other ways to vent anger and disillusionment, our country has produced far too many who see the act of Presidential assassination as the only way to change their lives and reach the American goal of great success. And our society views the greatest success as being remembered. Perhaps John Wilkes Booth says it best when he explains to Lee Harvey Oswald that "when you kill a president, it isn't murder. Murder is a tawdry little crime; it's born of greed, or lust, or liquor. Adulterers and shopkeepers get murdered. But when a president gets killed, when Julius Caesar got killed... he was assassinated. And the man who did it..." I don't think I need to supply the answer.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham  
Department of Theatre  
Presents

# ASSASSINS

Music by Stephen Sondheim

Book by John Weidman

Based on an original idea by Charles Gilbert

Produced by special arrangements with Music Theatre International.

Set Design  
**Kelly Allison**

Light Design  
**Kelly Allison**

Costume Design  
**Russell S. Drummond**

Stage Manager  
**Heather Jackson**

Music Directed by  
**Michael King**

Directed by  
**Will York**

Opening Night, Wednesday, October 25, 2000

This production is funded in part by The UAB Cultural Activities Committee.

## CAST (In Order Of Appearance)

The Proprietor.....**Lee Turner**  
Leon Czolgosz.....**William S. Rogers**  
John Hinckley.....**Adam Fox**  
Charles Guiteau.....**Dennis McLernon\***  
Giuseppe Zangara.....**Kent Skates**  
Samuel Byck.....**Jon Hennington**  
Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme.....**Kristin Nichols**  
Sara Jane Moore.....**Lydia Milman**  
John Wilkes Booth.....**Jamie Cottle**  
The Balladeer.....**Royce G. Garrison**  
David Herold.....**Paul Dodson**  
The Bartender.....**Lee Turner**  
Bystanders/Ensemble.....**Paul Dodson, Natalia Narz,  
Lee Turner, Audra Yokley**  
Emma Goldman.....**Audra Yokley**  
Fairgoers.....**Paul Dodson, Nataliz Narz,  
Lee Turner, Audra Yokley**  
Roustabouts.....**Joel Glenn, Eric Paradise, Rodney Pickens, K. C. Sampsell**  
James Garfield.....**Lee Turner**  
James Blaine.....**Paul Dodson**  
Hangman.....**Joel Glenn**  
Warden.....**K. C. Sampsell**  
Billy.....**Anthony Ciulla\*\***  
Gerald Ford.....**Lee Turner**  
Lee Harvey Oswald.....**Michael Hicks**  
Housewife.....**Natalia Narz**

\* Member of UAB Theatre Faculty

\*\*Member of UAB Summer Theatre Workshop

## Musical Numbers

"Everybody's Got the Right".....	Proprietor, Assassins
"The Ballad of Booth".....	Balladeer, Booth
"How I Saved Roosevelt".....	Zangara, Ensemble
"Gun Song".....	Czolgosz, Booth, Guiteau, Moore
"The Ballad of Czolgosz.".....	Balladeer
"Unworthy of Your Love".....	Hinckley, Fromme
"The Ballad of Guiteau".....	Guiteau, Balladeer
"Another National Athem".....	Assassins, Balladeer
"November 22, 1963".....	Assassins
"Something Just Broke".....	Ensemble
Finale: "Everybody's Got the Right".....	Company

### One Fifteen Minute Intermission

## Orchestra

Conductor/Keyboard.....	Micheal King
Percussion.....	Maury Levine
Bass.....	Lissa LeGrand
Trombone.....	Bob Black
Trumpet.....	John Taylor
Reeds.....	Don Prater
Banjo/Guitar.....	Bill Monk

### \* SPECIAL WARNING \*

There are gunshots and cigarette smoke on stage during the production. Adult language used.

## THE ASSASSINS

### JOHN WILKES BOOTH (1838-1865)

Actor; in the words of one critic, "a star of the first magnitude," especially in the South ... Brother Edwin, however, was preeminent actor of the day ... Passionate supporter of the Confederate cause ... Concocted a plan to kidnap Abraham Lincoln and exchange his freedom for that of thousands of Confederate prisoners of war ... Assassinated Lincoln at Ford's Theater, April 14, 1865, during a performance of Our American Cousin ... Broke his leg as he escaped ... Finally run to earth in a Virginia tobacco barn, where he either was killed or killed himself to avoid capture ... Sent a letter to the newspapers the day of the assassination explaining his motives; letter never published.

### CHARLES GUTTEAU (1841-1882)

Pursued various careers, from the law to evangelism, failing at all of them ... Published a volume of theology, "The Truth," which was almost entirely a plagiarism ... Composed an unsolicited and barely coherent campaign speech for Republican Presidential candidate James Garfield, which he felt was responsible for Garfield's election; expected as a reward to be appointed Ambassador to France ... Rebuffed, shot Garfield twice in the back, July 2, 1881, as the President prepared to board a train at the Baltimore and Potomac railroad station, Washington, D.C. ... On the morning of his execution, composed a poem, I Am Going to the Lordy, which he recited from the gallows immediately before he was hanged.

### LEON CZOLGOSZ (1873-1901)

Son of recently arrived Polish immigrants ... Full-time laborer by age 12, first in a glass factory, later in a wire mill ... Attended a number of Anarchist rallies and had a brief meeting with Anarchist agitator Emma Goldman ... Assassinated President William McKinley, September 6, 1901, at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo ... "I killed the President because he was the enemy of the good people, the good working people," he said. "I done my duty."

### GIUSEPPE ZANGARA (1900-1933)

Immigrant bricklayer from Calabria ... Barely five feet tall ... Suffered burning pains in stomach, which he blamed on capitalist system which forced his father to put him to work at age 6 ... Attempted to assassinate President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt, February 15, 1933, as Roosevelt spoke to crowd of supporters in Miami's Bayfront Park ... Too small to see over the crowd, he stood on a chair, which wobbled, causing him to miss Roosevelt, and instead kill Mayor Anton Cermak of Chicago.

**LEE HARVEY OSWALD** (1931-1963) Assassinated President John F Kennedy from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas, Texas, November 22, 1963.

**SAMUEL BYCK** (1930-1974)

Unemployed tire salesman ... Sent long, rambling tape recordings to various celebrities, among them Jonas Salk, Senator Abraham Ribicoff and Leonard Bernstein ... Convinced that the American political system was fundamentally corrupt, he picketed the White House, Christmas Eve 1973, dressed in a Santa Claus suit ... Attempted to assassinate President Richard Nixon, February 22, 1974, by hijacking a commercial jetliner that he intended to crash dive into the White House ... Killed two before he himself was killed.

**LYNETTE "SQUEAKY" FROMME** (b. 1948)

Middle-class childhood in Los Angeles suburbs - cheerleader in high school ... Met Charles Manson on the beach in Venice, California, 1967, and became one of his disciples; believed Manson was the Messiah whose teachings could save mankind ... Planned to commit a crime for which she would be arrested and put on trial; Manson would appear as a witness at the trial and preach to the world ... Attempted to assassinate President Gerald Ford, September 5, 1975, as he left the Senator Hotel in Sacramento.

**SARA JANE MOORE** (b. 1930)

Married five times, four children, entered and dropped out of nursing school, joined the Women's Army Corps, became a C.P.A. ... At age 42, abandoned marriage and career to immerse herself in counter-culture lifestyle and revolutionary politics of the day ... Recruited as informant by the F.B.I. ... In effort to reestablish her radical credentials, attempted to assassinate President Gerald Ford, September 22, 1975, as he left the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco.

**JOHN W. HINCKLEY, JR.** (b. 1955)

Son of a successful oil company executive; mother, a self-styled model homemaker ... Attended college for seven years without graduating, moved back in with his parents ... Developed an obsessive infatuation with movie actress Jodie Foster ... After several failed attempts to make contact with her, determined to attract her attention by killing a prominent public figure ... Attempted to assassinate President Ronald Reagan as he left the Washington Hilton Hotel, March 30, 1981, seriously wounding four people, including the President.

**Technical Staff For This Production**

Production Manager.....Kelly Allison  
Technical Director.....Ed Zuckerman  
Master Electrician/Electronics Technologist.....Russ Friedrikis  
Props Master.....Phillip Anderson  
Shop Foreman/Master Carpenter.....C. David Loggins  
Production Electrician.....Michael Rawlins  
Associate Lighting Designers.....Lydia Milman and R. Daniel Walker  
Assistant Stage Manager.....Paula York  
Light Board Operator.....Meredith Murphy  
Electrician.....James Michael Vickers  
Sound Running Crew.....James Michael Vickers  
Scene Shop Assistants.....James Ball, Jessica Holbert, Michael Rawlins  
Construction Crew.....Tritano D. Evans, Kyle B. Johnson, Major Jouret,  
Gregory F. Micheals, Lydia Milman, Meredith Murphy,  
Sherry K. Reeves, Jody Rivera Atkins, Sarah N. Sheffield,  
Marcus Wehby, Steven M. Whitcomb, Jimmie R. Whitson  
Props Crew.....Stephanie McKinnon, Jennifer Murphy, Kyle B. Johnson

**Costume Staff for this Production**

Costume Studio Supervisor.....Russell S. Drummond  
Assistant Costume Studio Supervisor.....Lisa Forrest  
Costume Crew.....Walter Allen, Jonida Beqo, Allison Glenn  
Costume Assistants.....James L. Ball, Daniel "Creed" Bowlen,  
Rachel L. Burttram, Jessie L. McElroy, Lucie I. McLemore,  
Meredith Murphy, Natalia Narz, Eric A. Paradise,  
Channing N. Rodriguez, William S. Rogers, Paula York  
Dressers.....Lisa Forrest and Lucie I. McLemore

**Production Staff**

Graphic Design/Cover Design.....Walter Allen  
House Manager.....Jerry Sims  
Associate House Manager.....Ed Rosendahl  
Media Relations.....Shannon Thomason