

# **The Cherry Orchard**

**by Anton Chekhov**

**Directed by Stephen Nunns**

**Oct 10-16, 2025**

**Center for the Arts  
Mainstage Theatre**

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

### Honor Native Land

Every community owes its existence and strength to the generations before them, around the world, who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy into making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will; some were drawn to migrate from their homes in the hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical in building mutual respect and connections across all barriers of heritage and difference.

At Towson University, we believe it is important to create dialogue to honor those that have been historically and systemically disenfranchised. So, we acknowledge the truth that is often buried: We are on the ancestral lands of communities and nations which include the [Susquehannock](#) (suh-skwuh-ha-naak), [Nanticoke](#) (nan-tuh-kowk) and the [Piscataway](#) (puh-ska-tuh-way) people who consider the land that the university currently occupies part of their ancient homeland. These were among the first in the Western Hemisphere. We are on indigenous land that was seized from the tribes and many others by European colonists.

We pay respects to these elders and ancestors. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today.

**Eating and drinking are prohibited in the theatre. Towson University is a smoke-free campus. Please turn off all cell phones and electronic devices. If there is an emergency, please WALK TO THE NEAREST EXIT. Photographic, video, or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited by copyright law.**

For additional information on productions, please visit our website at [www.towson.edu/theatre](http://www.towson.edu/theatre)

For a complete listing of events at Towson University, please visit [events.towson.edu](http://events.towson.edu)

If you would like to share a comment on this production, please e-mail [theatre@towson.edu](mailto:theatre@towson.edu)

# The Cherry Orchard

by Anton Chekhov

Adaptation by Stephen Nunns and  
Atlas Kazan

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Nunns  
Directed by Stephen Nunns

October 10-16, 2025

at Towson University

Center for the Arts, Mainstage Theatre

7:30pm - October 10, 11, 13, 14, 16

2pm - October 12

*The Cherry Orchard* runs approximately 2 hours with a brief intermission.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

## TIME & PLACE

The action takes place on Mme. Ranevskaya's estate

## CAST

Liuboff Andreievna Ranevskaya, a landowner.....Maggie Sheriff  
Anya, her daughter, aged seventeen.....Sarah Bella Joyce  
Varya, her adopted daughter, aged twenty-seven.....Gwendolyn Swift  
Leonid Andreievitch Gaieff, Liubov Andreievna's brother.....Bianca "Binks" Sanchez  
Yermolai Alexeievitch Lopakhin, a merchant.....Nick Yarnevich  
Peter Sergeievitch Trofimoff, a student.....Josh Omobhude  
Boris Borisovitch Semyonoff-Pishchik, a landowner.....Owen Roughton  
Charlotta Ivanovna, a governess.....Roman Nowak  
Semyon Panteleievitch Yepikhodoff, a clerk.....Billy Snyder  
Dunyasha (Avdotya Fyodorovna), a maidservant.....Emmanuella Labrousse  
Firs, an old footman, aged eighty-seven.....Atlas Kazan  
Yasha, a young footman.....Ryan McGaskey  
A Homeless Man, A Post Office Clerk, A Moving Man.....Curtis Brodie

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

Stephen Nunns  
DIRECTOR

Hannah Brill  
COSTUME DESIGNER

Chris Carcione  
PROJECTIONS DESIGNER

Daniel Ettinger  
SCENIC DESIGNER

Jay Herzog  
SOUND DESIGNER

Erica Sweitzer  
LIGHTING DESIGNER

Faith Singletary  
STAGE MANAGER

Eddie Stockman  
CHOREOGRAPHER

Luci Thomas & Nick Yarnevich  
MUSIC DIRECTORS

During one of the performances of *The Cherry Orchard*, Chekhov was heard to say so that Stanislavsky could hear him: "Look here, I'll write a new play which begins thus: 'Now nice, how quiet No birds are heard, no dogs, no cuckoo, no owl, no nightingales, no bells, no clock striking and even no cricket...'" (Sazonov, p. 192)

Anton Chekhov has historically gotten a pretty bad rap. Mention his name to students and audiences, and the reaction—if there is one at all—is usually disdain. "It's boring." "Nothing happens." "It's depressing."

There are probably two main reasons for these kinds of responses. First, most of the English translations that people encountered during the 20th century (and beyond) were done by well-meaning scholars with staunch conservative values. There were a number of these folks, but the most famous was the British translator, Constance Garnett. Garnett was probably the most famous Russian translator of the 20th century; she translated Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Turgenev, all of Chekhov's major plays, and many other works.

While Garnett had an impressive output, her translations—which even today are the ones many students encounter—are often stilted and sound more upper-class British than turn-of-the-century Russian. Worse than that, she even tended to clean up spicier passages in order to placate middle-brow English tastes. (David Foster Wallace called her translations "excruciatingly Victorianish" (Foster)).

The other issue is Chekhov's connection to the director and theorist Constantin Stanislavsky. Stanislavsky, along with his partner Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko, ran The Moscow Art Theatre and was responsible for the first successful stagings of Chekhov's major plays. He was also the 20th century's main proponent of realistic method acting. As such, Chekhov has been aligned with Stanislavsky and his naturalism.

This is not really fair. As we can see from the quotation above, Chekhov was no fan of Stanislavski's hyper-realistic staging techniques that not only embraced psychological realism but also an overly naturalistic *mise en scène*, complete with realistic sets and lighting and sound design.

Chekhov may have been interested in realism, but he was a man of the theatre—he was married to an actress, after all—and he often included non-realistic theatrical elements, such as physical comedy, asides to the audience, and soliloquies. Realism is all well and good, but I believe that Chekhov would have acknowledged that it was just a style, and that other styles are just as legitimate.

This production is an experiment that tries to address these points.



Scenic Design for Act I of our production by Daniel Ettinger

The first act is staged in the realistic manner of Stanislavski's original production from 1904—or at least our company's impression of what that production might have been like. The translation, however, is a directly literal one courtesy of (mostly) Google Translate. The translation is literally correct but abides by the Russian syntax and structure. As a result, it sounds a bit strange to our modern ears.

The second act is set in the 1920s and performed in a style that is a combination of German Expressionism—think *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*—and Russian structuralism—specifically Vsevolod Meyerhold's biomechanical acting approach. The point is to explore and utilize the early reactions and critiques of and alternatives to a Stanislavski-style naturalism.

For the third act, we move forward in time to the U.S. in the early 1970s and present the play in the Broadway musical style of that period. The aesthetics of the American musical shifted quite a lot in this period; rock and pop music were being integrated more and more. The music in this act is a not-so-subtle homage to composers Stephen Schwartz and Andrew Lloyd-Webber. The choreography is influenced by the work of Bob Fosse.

Finally, the fourth act brings us to the 21st century and back to a certain sort of realism, but one that is both influenced and infused with media and technology. These elements create a new kind of realism—one that is less traditionally theatrical and more influenced by film, television, and social media.

While this approach is admittedly schizophrenic, we believe that it gives Chekhov the opportunity to cast off the chains of realism that were thrust upon him and hopefully allows the audience to see his work in a new light that emphasizes the humor (after all, he did call the play “a comedy in four acts”) as well as the deep empathy and humanity of his writing.

## Stephen Nunns Director

### Sources:

Sazonov, Julie. “Stanislavsky.” *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 18, no. 52, 1939, pp. 184–201. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4203560>. Accessed 1 Oct. 2025.

Wallace, David Foster. “Feodor’s Guide: Joseph Frank’s Dostoevsky,” *The Village Voice*, April 1996).

### Translations used for Act 2 and 3:

Max Mandell - 1908

Julius West – 1916

Jenny Covan – 1922

Constance Garnett – 1923

George Calderon – 1927

## SONG LYRICS

### THIS OLD HOUSE (CAST)

There's a chill in the beams  
And a leak in the roof,  
But this house keeps on dancing  
And we seem so aloof  
There's been knocking on the old pipes  
And a crack in the floor...  
But nobody looks up,  
Anymore.

It's the wrong time for music  
It's the wrong time to dance  
It's not a day to consider  
This kind of circumstance  
Once I saw in the orchard  
The little boy I adored  
But now I can't see him  
Anymore

This old house will keep on dancing  
These walls can't complain  
Behind the laughs and chatter  
The future's going up in flames

This old house will keep on dancing  
Voices harmonize  
Champagne, music, laughter  
While the orchard slowly dies

I feel like something's changing  
It's about to begin  
It's like a light through the curtains  
Like a breath on the skin

There's nobles and there's servants  
We make a motley parade  
We smile while  
The Empire slowly fades

This old house will keep on dancing  
A waltz or tango might do  
We trip the light fantastic  
While the world is falling through

This house will keep on dancing  
Dreams decay with the truth  
Storm clouds gather in the Empire  
We all are the living proof

Let's have a toast to the moonlight  
Though it seems obscene.  
We are waltzing through the ashes  
now  
The band plays  
The orchard fades  
Like a dream

This old house will keep on dancing  
These walls can't complain  
Behind the laughs and chatter  
The future's going up in flames

This old house will keep on dancing  
Dreams decay with the truth  
Storm clouds gather in the Empire  
We all are the living proof

### THE ONE WHO WILL STAY (VARYA)

I wish I was rich  
A couple of kopeks would do  
I'd take my vows  
Join a convent  
And leave all of you.

The dancers all look to the sky  
I do my accounts  
And try not to cry  
Nothing but heartaches and tears  
For the one who's still here

Lopakhin is smart  
Of marriage, he'll never speak  
He talks to me once  
Ignores me the rest of the week

I gather the spoons  
And whisper a prayer

He's looking through me  
Like I'm never there  
No pledges, no promise, no praise  
For the one who's erased

I'm the one who stays  
Drifting through this house  
Like a ghost in a haze

The trains will leave  
Autumn will let out a sigh  
You'll leave for France  
While everything here slowly dies

You'll sing La Marseillaise  
I'll be here sweeping out graves  
I know the future's not bright  
It looks quite gray  
For the one who will stay

### ABOVE LOVE (LIUBOV & TROFIMOV)

TROFIMOV  
She's watching  
She's hovering  
She's meddling  
She's scheming in the back room  
She sees romance  
She sees a crime  
As if I'd fall  
For something so sublime  
As love  
Beneath me  
As love  
Beneath me

As love

LIUBOV  
Then I must be  
Beneath you too  
To make that clear  
Was very kind of you

The truth can hurt  
As much as lies  
Oh, Petya, dear  
Say something true  
Something wise



## ABOVE LOVE (CONT.) (LIUBOV & TROFIMOV)

TROFIMOV

The path is gone  
The grove expired  
The trees are bare  
The dreams have been retired

Calm yourself

Accept your fate  
It's not too late  
To turn around  
And face the truth  
The inevitable truth  
No need for an excuse  
Just try to face the truth

LIUBOV

You see truth  
And you see lies  
Life's been hidden  
From your eyes

The orchard's breath  
It's ache, it's me  
If it's sold  
Then sell all three

Petya, dear,  
Show some grace  
My boy drowned here  
In this place

You chase thoughts  
From year to year  
Don't berate me  
Trim your beard!

LIUBOV

Around my throat  
The sea is rough and-  
Paris telegrams  
Come in  
He says he's ill  
Please come to him

Daily notes  
What can I do?  
Il écrit  
Qu'il est perdu

It's a stone

TROFIMOV

He is small  
He's a leech  
He's a liar  
He's a thief

He robbed you  
You closed your eyes  
You call it love  
I call it lies.

He's a rascal  
He's a wretch  
Can't you see

LIUBOV (cont.)

I love him  
I love him  
I love him  
I love him  
I love him  
I love him

## ABOVE LOVE (CONT.) (LIUBOV & TROFIMOV)

I'm so sick of  
You and your critiques  
You're no scholar  
You're a circus freak!

You ought to feel  
You're not above  
You're just afraid to fall  
In love

You're a prude  
You're a geek  
You are unremarkable  
You are not unique

You're just a schoolboy  
Who's grown a beard  
You think you're pure  
But I think you're weird

You're a fungus  
You're a growth  
You bore me to tears with your  
Speeches and your oaths

Just find a mistress  
Just get a wife  
Be an adult  
Get yourself a life!

## LEONID'S LAMENT (LEONID)

Carom into the corner  
Hug the rail – the final ride  
Yellow into the corner  
Red to the side

Double off the cushion  
Hold the cue – the table's bare  
White into the middle pocket  
Black to the chair

I'm so tired  
Take all these  
Black Sea herrings  
Anchovies  
I've not eaten  
I am done  
Help me please



## LOPAHKIN BUYS THE ORCHARD (LOPAHKIN)

When we got to the auction  
Deriganov's there already  
Leonid had only fifteen thou  
Deriganov offered thirty  
I got the message bright and early  
I went in and offered thirty-five  
He put in for forty-five  
And I put in for fifty  
And now that means  
He bids fives and I bid tens

Well, it's easy to see  
What's happened to me  
The cherry orchard's mine!

Tell me that I'm drunk already  
I stand up but I'm not steady  
Tell me that it's all just a dream  
Tell me that I'm off my head  
Tell me I'm a muttonhead  
Don't you dare try and laugh at me!  
If papa and gramps could see me  
They'd be crazed  
And kind of screamy  
Twisting in their graves like whirligigs

That barefoot boy  
That stupid louse  
Has gone and bought this gorgeous  
house  
The loveliest spot on earth!

My family were all serfs  
No freedom or religion  
No entering this house  
Or eating in the kitchen  
Come look at Yermolai  
He's yelling and he's calling  
He's chopping with his axe head  
And all the trees are falling  
The fruits of 'magination  
Are wrapped up in the haze  
My children will be different  
And you'll be in a daze  
Annihilate the orchard  
And cut down all the trees  
We're building us some villas

Oh look, she's thrown away her  
keys!

## PRODUCTION TEAM

### Technical Director

### Lighting Director/Assistant Technical Director

### Assistant Stage Manager

### Stage Manager Liaison

### Costume Shop Manager

### Assistant Costume Shop Manager

### Acting Coach

### Lighting Faculty Mentor

### Properties Manager

### Dramaturgs

### Dramaturgy Faculty Mentor

### Assistant Scenic Designer

### Assistant Costume Designer

### Assistant Projections Designer & Programmer

### Lead Lighting Electricians

### Lighting Programmer

### Sound Engineer

### Audio Assistant

### Sound and Video Operator

### Light Board Operator

### Deckhands

### Wardrobe

### Camera Operators

### Scenic Carpenters

Garrett Weeda

Thomas Gardner

Mia Awad

Seth Schwartz

Alizon Santamaria

Hannah Brill

Donna Fox

Jay Herzog

Ace Mikolowsky

Camille Alston

Naomi Graham

Atlas Kazan

Luci Thomas

Robyn Quick

Carlee Ballard

Elizabeth Feuerbach

Luci Thomas

Maxwell "Mack" Leeuwen

Erica Sweitzer

Erica Sweitzer

Sam Markowitz

Bailey Berry

Dahlia Anjeh

Janiya Nwosu

Febisola Ajibade

Glenn Cannady

Caliyah Dickens

Mark Monroe

Ronni Snyder

Tyler Abercrombie

Ray Ortiz

Sophia Sgromo

Emery Sheriff

Lisbeth Avila

Daphne Snyder

Amy Clark

Darren De Groff

Casey Gessert

Daniel Morelli

Christian Smith



## PRODUCTION TEAM CONT.

### Costume Shop Staff

London Brooks  
Elizabeth Feuerbach  
Kanwulia lyke-Azubogu  
Faith Singletary  
Katie Simmons-Barth

### Poster Design & Production Photography

## SPECIAL THANKS

Yury Urnov

## COSTUME CREW

Lisbeth Avila  
Maggie Berry  
Gregg Boyle  
Curtis Brodie  
AniJ Fluker-Tucker  
Casey Gessert  
Toni Harrisingh  
Margaret Hellner  
Shelby Kiesel

Kellan Kinsey  
Shamar Martin  
Steven Pineda  
Fayth Proctor  
Mikaela Sanchioni  
Kaiya Sclae  
Catherine Weiss  
Cecelia Zombro

## SCENIC CREW

Mia Awad  
Davin Banks  
Katie Bartles  
Jaelyn Craigen  
Joseph Hatchett  
Emmanuella Labrousse  
Jenna Leannarda

Jalen Peal  
Faith Singletary  
Humatabae Smith  
Rachel Smith  
Nathaniel Swyers  
Justine Willard

## LIGHTING & SOUND CREW

Carlee Ballard  
Arin Ballard-May  
Joseph Hatchett  
Jayla Johnson  
Corinne Murphy  
Robert Noakes III

Josh Omobhude  
Errin Powell  
Rebecca White  
Jacob Wivell  
Domenico Zuniga

## THEATRE ARTS FACULTY & STAFF

Hannah Brill.....Assistant Costume Shop Manager  
Christopher Carcione.....Script Analysis/Directing  
Tom Cascella.....Assistant to the Chairperson/Intro to American Theatre  
Kerry Lee Chipman.....Scenic Design  
Ruben Del Valle, Jr. ....Movement/Acting for Musical Theatre  
Danielle Drakes.....Script Analysis/Community Outreach/TTI/Directing/African American Theatre  
Thomas Gardner.....Assistant Technical Director  
Jay Herzog.....Lighting & Sound Design  
Tavia La Follette.....Theatre Studies/Cross-disciplinary Works/Theatre for Social Change  
Stephen Nunns.....Theories of Theatre/Theatre History/Directing  
Susan Picinich.....Theatre History/Costume, Dress and Society  
Julie Potter.....Costume Design/Chairperson  
Robyn Quick.....Theatre History/Dramaturgy  
Alizon Santamaria.....Costume Shop Manager  
Steven J. Satta.....Voice/Acting  
Katie Simmons-Barth.....Academic Program Coordinator  
Teresa Spencer.....Speech and Dialect/Acting  
Kirsten Sughrue.....Administrative Assistant  
Garrett Weeda.....Technical Director  
David White.....Script Analysis/Playwriting/Thesis  
Peter Wray.....Acting/Shakespeare/Senior Acting Seminar

## ADJUNCT FACULTY

Donna Fox.....Acting  
Melissa Freilich.....Acting/Stage Combat  
Sha-Nel Henderson.....Acting/Theatre for Social Change  
Corey Hennessey.....Acting/Intro to Theatre  
Shartoya Jn.Baptiste.....Intro to Theatre Design  
Kaitlin Kiddy.....Acting  
Debra McWilliams.....Acting  
Dian Perrin.....Acting  
Kyle Prue.....Acting  
Susan J. Rotkovitz.....Acting/Theatre Studies/Arts Integration  
Seth Schwartz.....Stage Management  
Rohaizad Suaidi .....Acting/Cultural Diversity in Contemporary Theatre  
Yury Urnov.....Acting/Directing  
Gavin Witt.....Theatre History

## PROFESSOR EMERITI

Tom Casciero.....Professor Emeritus  
Naoko Maeshiba.....Professor Emerita  
John Manlove .....Professor Emeritus  
Juanita Rockwell .....Professor Emerita  
Diane Smith-Sadak.....Professor Emerita

## COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION

Regina Carlow.....Dean  
Greg Faller.....Associate Dean  
Ashley Gregg.....Events and Operations Coordinator  
Laura Malkus.....Marketing and Public Relations Manager  
Seth Schwartz.....Director, Center of the Performing Arts





*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by David M. Rubenstein.*

*Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.*

*Additional support is provided by The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; and the Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation.*

*Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.*

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). 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 KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.



Theatre  
Arts



# BFA AUDITIONS

SAT | DEC 6 | 10-2PM

SAT | FEB 7 | 10-1 PM

FRI | FEB 13 | 2-4 PM

SAT | FEB 14 | 10-2 PM

SAT | FEB 21 | 10-2 PM

SAT | FEB 28 | 10-2 PM

Visit the website to schedule your audition.

## STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Please consider giving a gift to the Department of Theatre Arts Scholarship Fund. The money raised by your generous donations helps students offset the cost of education and sponsors students' travel to conferences, auditions for graduate schools, and special events related to their research and development.

### DONATE HERE

#### Purchase a Seat:

You can help build our student scholarship funds by purchasing a seat. If you are interested and want further details about seat purchasing, please email the Department of Theatre Arts at [theatre@towson.edu](mailto:theatre@towson.edu).

#### The TU Department of Theatre Arts gratefully acknowledges the following gifts of scholarships:

The Askew Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patrons: Theda and Monk Askew

The Audrey Herman Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patrons: William Herman,  
Genevieve Nyborg

The Charles S. Dutton Theatre Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patrons: Charles S. Dutton 20<sup>th</sup>  
Century Fox Film Corporation, Home Box  
Office, Inc.

The Christopher David Legg Memorial Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patrons: Catherine Behrent and  
friends of Christopher Legg

The Cooley Arts Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patrons: Franklin & Alice Cooley

The C.R. Gillespie and Maravene S. Loeschke Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patrons: Theatre Alumni Group

The Jerry Gietka Graduate Theatre Scholarship  
Founding Patrons: Jerry & Catherine Gietka,  
and Lynda Ruszala In memory of Bernadette  
Gietka

The John Glover Scholarship Endowment for Acting Majors  
Founding Patrons: John Glover, Jack, and  
Cade Glover

The Nina E. Hughes Memorial Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patron: Nina E. Hughes

The Steve Yeager Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patron: Steve Yeager

The Theatre Department Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patrons: Purchasers of Mainstage  
Seats

The Peter Wray Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patrons: Robin and Peter Wray

The Walter F. Kramme Scholarship Endowment  
Founding Patron: Joseph C. Tischer

The Wylyn '76 and Marion '74 Hoffman Directing Scholarship  
Founding Patron: Wylyn L. Hoffman '76

## FRIENDS OF THE ARTS DONOR LIST

We are deeply grateful to our donors for investing in Towson University's College of Fine Arts and Communication. We recognize the following alumni, friends, students, faculty, staff, corporations, foundations and other organizations that supported the college through the Towson University Foundation with annual gifts of \$1,000 and above from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

#### \$50,000+

Harold J. Kaplan \*

#### \$25,000-\$49,999

Anonymous

Jamie A. Breazeale '84 & Gregory A. Breazeale '84  
E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation  
Peggy & Yale Gordon Charitable Trust  
Ginger Ross '80

#### \$10,000 to \$24,999

The William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund  
Baltimore Community Foundation  
Baltimore County Commission on Arts and Sciences  
Greg S. Faller  
Jerry Gietka  
Jerry's Fund Foundation, Inc.  
Steven E. Lane '77  
William Murray '08, '11  
Kathleen Shiota & Yoshinobu Shiota

#### \$5,000 to \$9,999

Ira J. and Mary K. Basler Foundation, Inc.  
Marsha P. Becker '99  
Christine E. Connelly & Steven M. Mister '85  
Connelly-Mister Fund  
Vira Jo Denney  
John G. Dreyer  
Maury Donnelly & Parr, Inc.  
Lauri Mitchell & David E. Mitchell  
Stephanie L. Papadopoulos & Nickolas Papadopoulos  
The Romita Fund  
Allan G. Scott  
Joanne P. Vatz '78 & Richard E. Vatz  
Nancy E. Wanich-Romita '00 & Victor J. Romita

#### \$2,500 to \$4,999

Keith L. Ewancio '94 '07  
Montcalmo Family Charitable Fund

Bonnie J. Montcalmo & Anthony J. Montcalmo  
The Presser Foundation

#### \$1,000 to \$2,499

Allegis Group Foundation  
Anonymous  
Beth M. Arman & Robert M. Mintz  
Asia Collective Night Market  
Eileen Aven '85 & Jeff G. Aven '84  
Meghan V. Behm & Scott A. Behm  
Thomas B. Beyard '77  
Comerica Charitable Trust  
Robert A. Cook  
Dorothy F. Curley Tecklenburg '77 & John C. Tecklenburg II  
Ruth L. Drucker  
Rosalind Ehudin & Alan Shecter  
Mike T. Flanagan '02  
Delores S. Harvey  
Nhung T. Hendy  
Rodica I. Johnson  
Deb-Jaden-Kyla Kielty Foundation  
Deborah Kielty  
Beth C. Littrell & Keon W. Littrell '98  
William C. McNamara '94 '98  
Jane G. Murphy & Michael A. Murphy  
Brian K. O'Connell '87  
O'Shea/Aven Charitable Fund  
Phyllis A. Parker & James T. Parker II  
Kari B. Paulson & Brian W. Murray  
Michele G. Renaud '85 & James W. Renaud  
Karen F. Silverstrim & Melanie L. Perreault  
Alan Shecter Charitable Gift Fund  
Three Arts Club of Homeland, Inc.  
Towson University Black Alumni Alliance  
Perry Witmer & Corey A. Witmer '99

\*Deceased

Great care was taken to ensure the accuracy of this listing, and we would appreciate your sharing with us any errors or omissions. Please direct inquiries to Jewel Perry, Assistant Director of Donor Engagement, at 410-704-3425 or [jperry@towson.edu](mailto:jperry@towson.edu).

To support the College of Fine Arts and Communication, visit [towson.edu/GiveToCOFAC](http://towson.edu/GiveToCOFAC), or contact Hilary Saunders at [hsaunders@towson.edu](mailto:hsaunders@towson.edu) or 410-704-4681.





# Whitney J. LeBlanc Jr.

LeBlanc with the set he designed for a summer season of Shakespeare plays in the Antioch Amphitheater, where he served as the technical director.

Whitney LeBlanc, born on June 20th, 1931, in Memphis, Tennessee, spent his formative years in Opelousas, Louisiana. He pursued higher education at the University of Iowa, where he earned a Master's in Theater Production in 1958.

In 1960, LeBlanc began teaching at Antioch College. He then held positions as a professor at Howard University, Lincoln University, the University of Texas, and Towson University (then Towson State College).

In 1969, he joined the Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting, directing and producing 86 episodes of *Our Street*. He then moved to Hollywood, where he joined the Norman Lear/Tandem Tat organization as the Associate Director of *Good Times*. He would spend the next two decades as a director and a stage manager for numerous shows.

Aside from his contributions to television, LeBlanc was a prolific author, penning five books, and notably receiving the Amistad award for his novel *Blues in the Wind*, a part of his Blues Trilogy.

In 1996, he retired from the Directors Guild of America and moved to Napa Valley, California, where he began designing stained glass window pieces.

Mr. LeBlanc passed away in February of 2023. He is succeeded by his wife, Diane LeBlanc, and four children, leaving behind a lasting impact on both his family and the countless students and friends he inspired throughout his career.

## THEATRE Theatre U-stimulates understanding

Towerlight, April 18, 1969

Theatre U was a non-profit community theater organized by Whitney LeBlanc and his then wife Elizabeth Walton at the Garrison Blvd. Church Center in Baltimore City. LeBlanc's vision for Theatre U was rooted in fostering better understanding among people of all races through the power of theater, the establishment of which was catalyzed by the recent assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The name "Theatre U" was intentionally kept a secret, allowing audiences to interpret its meaning freely. LeBlanc emphasized the importance of community involvement, stating, "no matter how polished our performances, if we do not involve the community we will have failed our goal."

LeBlanc expressed a desire to involve Drama Department students from TSC with the inner city, particularly with Black communities. His goal was to expose TSC students to authentic experiences, challenging them to move beyond pretense and understand the realities of different communities.

Towerlight article and images courtesy of the Towson Special Collections and University Archives

**"No matter how polished our performances, if we do not involve the community we will have failed our goal."**

- Whitney LeBlanc

## Unearthing Towson's History Project

In 2022, Allyn Lawrence, a student researcher with the Unearthing Towson's History Project, conducted an interview with Whitney LeBlanc where he recounts the memories of his experience as the first Black faculty member at the school.

To watch the collection of interviews with members of Towson's history, visit [archives.towson.edu](https://archives.towson.edu)

# LeBlanc Joins TSC

## LeBlanc New Set Designer

Towerlight, October 22, 1965

The Speech and Drama Department was established at Towson State College (TSC) by Richard Gillespie in 1964. Just a decade after the ruling of *Brown v. Board*, Gillespie set out to integrate the department by recruiting Whitney LeBlanc as the assistant professor in Speech and Drama and the first Black faculty member at the school.

Despite his contentment as a professor at Howard University at the time, LeBlanc felt compelled to serve the purpose of integrating Towson's faculty. He joined TSC in 1965.

In an oral history interview conducted through the Unearthing Towson's History Project he recalled his first day on campus. He recounts that only the four faculty members in the Speech and Drama Department spoke to him and he saw less than ten students of color. He likened his experience at TSC to that of Jackie Robinson during this time.



Towerlight, October 22, 1965

# "Well, let 'em come."

Racial tensions at TSC came to a boil with The Glen Player's production of *And People All Around*, directed by Mr. LeBlanc. Written by George Sklar, the play is based on the murders of three civil rights workers, Andrew Goodman, James Chaney and Michael Schwerner, in Philadelphia, Mississippi.



In anticipation of the opening night, President Hawkins called LeBlanc and Gillespie to his office where FBI agents informed him of a protest to the play organized by Klansmen, to which LeBlanc responded, "Well, let 'em come." Security measures were put in place, assigning an agent to monitor both the students and LeBlanc during the play.

On the opening night of October 20th, dozens of Klan members dressed in full regalia and George P. Mahoney hats gathered on York Road and marched in front of Newell Hall. The disruptors were met with heckling Towson students and the play was put on as originally intended.

Tower Echoes  
Yearbook, 1967

Towerlight articles and yearbook image courtesy of the Towson Special Collections and University Archives



# Student Studio

Ruth Marder Studio Theatre

**Oct. 29-Nov. 1, 2025 @ 7:30 PM**

- *Hiding in the Light of the Day* by Humatabae Smith | Directed by Makayla Hamilton
- *6 Days* by Shamar Martin | Directed by Christian Smith

**Tickets \$5**

**Nov. 13-15, 2025 @ 7:30 PM**

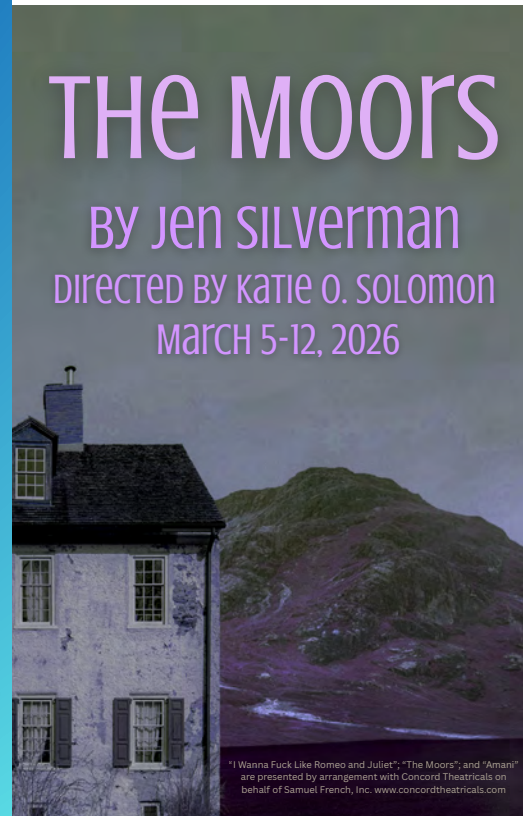
- *Wright the Future: A Festival of Plays* produced by Davin Banks

**Free Admission**



**I Wanna  
F\*ck  
Like Romeo  
and Juliet**

**by Andrew Rincón**  
Directed by Sache Satta  
Nov 20-25, 2025



"I Wanna Fuck Like Romeo and Juliet"; "The Moors"; and "Amani" are presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. [www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)