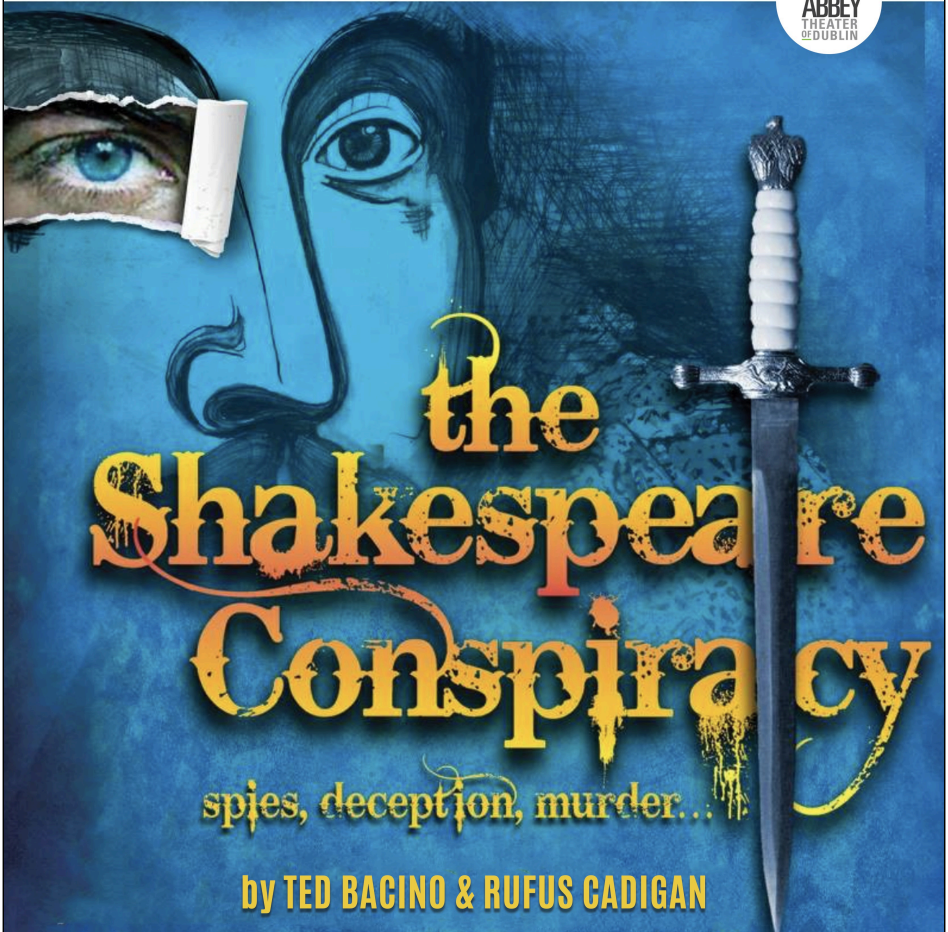


PLAYBILL®

Abbey Theater of Dublin
Evolution Theatre Company



PRESENTS

THE SHAKESPEARE CONSPIRACY

by

TED BACINO & RUFUS CADIGAN

Directed by Aaron Mendoza

featuring

Zach Shafer

Mark Phillips Schwamberger*

Todd Taylor**

Hailey Marshall

Samual Nickoloff

Euan Baker

Lighting Designer
Iz Nichols

Set Design
Aaron Mendoza

Sound Engineer
David Crone

Costumes & Props
Queenie Ledbottom

Stage Manager
Lauren Wong**

*Member of Actor's Equity Association

**Working under an agreement with Actor's Equity Association



The production is approximately 2 hours with one 10 minute intermission.

PLEASE NOTE: The videotaping or making of electronic or other audio and/or visual recordings of the production and distributing recordings or streams in any medium, including the internet, is strictly prohibited, a violation of the author's rights and actionable under United States copyright law

CAST & PRODUCTION/ CREATIVE

Cast Members

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Christopher Marlowe | Zach Shafer |
| Sir Thomas Walsingham | Mark Phillips Schwamberger |
| Sir Francis Walsingham | Todd Taylor |
| Constable Maunder | Hailey Marshall |
| Thomas Kyd / William Shakespeare/ Young Man | Samual Nickoloff |
| Lord Henry Wriothesley / Skeres | Euan Baker |

Production / Creative

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Director | Aaron Mendoza |
| Stage Manager | Lauren Wong |
| Lighting | Iz Nichols |
| Set Designer | Aaron Mendoza |
| Sound Engineering | David Crowe |
| Costume Designer | Queenie Ledbottom |



WHO'S WHO



Zach Shafer

as Christopher Marlowe

Zach Shafer is excited to be back for his second show with Evolution Theatre Company! He is an alumni of The Ohio State University with degrees in Theatre and Communication. Recent credits include Evolution Theatre's A Real Boy (Pinocchio) and Madlab's Normies (Queen). Zach would like to thank his family and friends for their constant support of his theatrical endeavors!



Mark Phillips Schwamberger

as Sir Thomas Walsingham

Mark's theatrical career spans over forty years. His passion for theatre began during his undergraduate studies at The University of Louisville and continues to this day. He has performed in productions at both Off and Off – Off Broadway venues as well as performing in New York and Michigan, he has also been in various musicals, comedies and dramas in Kentucky, Florida and Ohio. He is a member of Actors' Equity Association.



Todd Taylor

as Sir Francis Walsingham

Todd Taylor is thrilled to be cast in the fifth play with Evolution Theater! Recent work includes "The Canterville Ghost" playing Weeds, and Hester the Horrid., "Silver Foxes" as Benny. Work at Aethereal Jest was "Little Women of Orchard House", playing Mr. Laurence. And at CPAC includes, "You Can't Take it With You" as the father, "Into the Woods" as Mysterious Man, and "Our Town" as Mr Webb. A big thank you goes to you, the theater patrons for your support and Evolution Theatre for the opportunity of the challenge.

WHO'S WHO



Hailey Marshall

as Constable Maunder

This is Hailey's first time working with the Evolution company and she's so excited. She graduated with a BFA in acting at Wright State University and has been a combat director and intimacy coordinator for many shows around Columbus as well as acting. Her past shows included *Nine Girls* at Ethereal Jest company, *Midsummer Nights Dream* at Curtain Players. She is excited to work with such amazing actors and team and can't wait for you to see the show they have worked hard on. She would like to thank her family for support, especially her fiancé for dealing with her late-night line memorizing.



Samual Nickoloff

as Thomas Kyd / William Shakespeare / Young Man

Samuel Nickoloff has been performing for over a decade. He graduated from Bowling Green State University in the spring of 2024, having pursued an education in film production and theatre. *The Shakespeare Conspiracy* is Samuel's second show with Evolution, following his role in *A Real Boy*. Samuel is extremely grateful for his family, friends, mentors, and all others who have helped him pursue his career as a performer.



Euan Baker *as Lord Henry Wriothesley / Skeres*

Euan Baker is thrilled to return to Evolution Theatre Company and is honored to work on *SHAKESPEARE CONSPIRACY* with such a wonderful cast. Recent credits include: *OUR TOWN* (Howie Newsome), *THE INTERITANCE* (Young Man 8/Jason 2/Charles), and *ABUNDANT LIFE* (Man 2). When he isn't on stage, Euan plans summer camps for local youth. He would like to thank his friends, family, and his dog PB for all their love and support.

WHO'S WHO



Aaron Mendoza

Director

Aaron Mendoza is originally from the colorful state of Colorado and now proudly calls Ohio home. This marks his third season with Evolution, and he is thrilled to be collaborating with the company once again. Previous directing credits include *Starmaker* and *You Will Get Sick* (assistant director). Aaron would like to thank his partner, family, and friends for their unwavering love and support. www.aaronmendoza.net



Lauren Wong

Stage Manager

Lauren is excited to learn about this conspiracy involving Shakespeare. You may have seen her working Evolution's box office or with shows in the past few years, including some Evolution favorites "Sordid Lives" and "The View Upstairs". She has also performed stage management and tech duties at Little Theatre Off Broadway, Gallery Players, Curtain Players, and other theatre companies around Columbus. Sending a huge Thank You to the cast and creative/production team on this show, and to the audiences who support live theatre!

Iz Nichols

Lighting

Iz is on the staff of the Abbey Theater of Dublin and is please to be once again working on an Evolution Theatre production.

Aaron Mendoza

Set Designer

In theatre we wear many hats.

WHO'S WHO

David Crowe

Sound Engineering

David is on the staff of the Abbey Theater of Dublin and is please to be once again working on anEvolution Theatre production.

Queenie Ledbottom

Costume Designer

Queenie is happy to be, once again, working on an Evolution Theatre production. Enjoy the show!



THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS



Greater Columbus Arts Council

And a Special Thank you to:



Open Door

PRODUCTIONS

About The Shakespeare Conspiracy

After presenting the World Premiere in Columbus, Evolution Theatre Company now brings *The Shakespeare Conspiracy* to Dublin, Ohio! Based on the novel by Ted Bacino, the play tells the story of the greatest literary deception of all time. A historical dramedy that intertwines the mysteries and then puts the pieces together to offer the only possible resolution. A wild romp through gay 16th Century Elizabethan England. A rapidly unfolding detective narrative filled with drama, comedy, intrigue, murder and a touching love story. How could Christopher Marlowe, a known spy and England's foremost playwright be suspiciously murdered and quickly buried in an unmarked grave just days before he was to be tried for treason? How could William Shakespeare replace Marlowe as England's greatest playwright virtually overnight when he had never written anything before and was merely an unknown actor? Based on historical facts, could this really expose the greatest literary deception of all time?



Scadbury Manor is surrounded by a deep moat. It was the home of Thomas Walsingham, a London MP and wine merchant, remaining in the Walsingham family for over two centuries until its sale in 1660.



Bridewell Prison was a significant institution in London, initially established in 1553 in a former royal palace, becoming the world's first penitentiary, a place for imprisonment at hard labor and torture.

PRODUCTIONS

Our Final Production of 2025

Ever wondered what would happen if you took Bram Stoker's legendary vampire tale and put it into a blender with Mel Brooks, Monty Python, and The 39 Steps? That's just what happens in this lightning-fast, laugh-out-loud, 90-minute, gender-bending romp. When her sister Mina falls ill with a mysterious disease of the blood, Lucy Westfeldt and her fiancé, Jonathan Harker, enlist the help of famed female vampire hunter Doctor Jean Van Helsing. Their hunt for the dangerous and sexy Count Dracula abounds with clever wordplay and quick-change antics. Five actors play over a dozen roles in this bloodcurdlingly hilarious send-up of the literary classic.



Presenting Sponsors Robin & Peter Hersha

October 16 - 25



EVOLUTION THEATRE COMPANY

Ted Bacino(Playwright) Ted Bacino has had a wild career as a newspaper reporter, high school and college educator, executive-assistant Secretary of State in Illinois, and vice-president of a chain of banks. He has also directed more than 100 musicals for three colleges, a dinner-theater, and Starlight Theater. As a writer he has lived in Germany, London, Venice, and Paris. He is now 84 years old and resides in Palm Springs, CA. He has a BA and MA from Northern Illinois University and a KSG from Harvard.

Rufus Cadigan(Playwright) Rufus Cadigan is a retired theater professor who has taught at University of Kansas, Ottawa University, Rockford University and Regent's College in London, England. Cadigan has written a number of other produced plays in America such as "Blunderland" (also produced with Evolution) and "Might Have Gone Fishing."

Mark Phillips Schwamberger (Producer) – Mark Schwamberger's theatrical career spans over forty years. His passion for theatre began during his undergraduate studies at The University of Louisville and continues to this day. He has performed in productions at both Off and Off – Off Broadway venues as well as producing and directing cabaret shows at The Top of the Gate in NYC. Besides working and performing in New York and Michigan, he has also been in various musicals, comedies and dramas in Kentucky, Florida and Ohio. He is the Founder and Executive / Artistic Director of Evolution Theatre Company, an Actors' Equity Association Small Professional Theatre Company and the only professional LGBTQ+ Theatre Company in Central Ohio. He received his B.A. in Theatre for The Ohio State University. Mark is also an award-winning playwright. He is a member of Actors' Equity Association, the Dramatist Guild and the recipient of the 2024 Harold Award. www.mpschwamberger.com

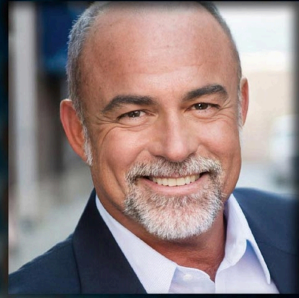
Evolution Theatre Company's Mission Statement

Evolution Theatre Company provides a supportive encouraging environment for celebrating the artistic vision of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and ally (LGBTQQIA) individuals, advancing the understanding of gender issues, and fostering the expression of creative performance arts by and about the LGBTQQIA community.

www.evolutiontheatre.org



Opening Eyes • Touching Hearts • Changing Minds



audible 

AWARD-WINNING AUDIOBOOK NARRATOR

DAVID ALLEN VARGO

“At the gym, I once got so lost in an audiobook David Allen Vargo was narrating that I didn’t even realize I’d been on the elliptical for an hour. Who needs a personal trainer when you have a captivating story and storyteller to keep you moving?”

AN AUDIBLE LISTENER

vargo-narrates.com