

COMMUNITY PLAYERS OF SALISBURY

# ~~I Hate~~ HAMLET

By Paul Rudnick

Directed by Darrell Mullins

**APRIL 4, 5, 10, 11 & 12 at 7:30pm**  
**APRIL 6 & 13 at 2:00pm**

Community Players Theater  
5109 Nutters Cross Road, Salisbury, MD

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*of Salisbury*



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Production

88<sup>th</sup>  
Year

**Community Players of Salisbury, Inc.**

presents

# ***I Hate Hamlet***

**By Paul Rudnick**

**Directed by Darrell Mullins**

**Friday, April 5 - 7:30 PM**

**Saturday, April 6 - 7:30 PM**

**Sunday, April 7 - 2:00 PM**

**Thursday - 7:30 PM**

**Friday, April 12 - 7:30 PM**

**Saturday, April 13 - 7:30 PM**

**Sunday, April 14 - 2:00 PM**

**Presented through special arrangement with  
Dramatists Play Service**

**440 Park Avenue, South, New York, NY 10016**

**This production was made possible, in part,  
by a grant from the Salisbury/Wicomico Arts Council  
and the Maryland State Arts Council**

## Community Players' President's Message

Welcome, one and all, to the Community Players of Salisbury's production of *I Hate Hamlet*. Congratulations to the cast and crew of *I Hate Hamlet*, which is our second main stage production held at Community Players' Theater.

The transformation of the building into a theater is exciting but it does require funding. We appreciate the financial support received from the Maryland State Arts Council, the Salisbury Wicomico Arts Council, the Worcester County Arts Council, Beach to Bay Heritage Area, The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore and the Coastal Association of Realtors. We also appreciate the support of local businesses, our patrons, our members, and our audience. If you would like to help Players financially, please contact me.

Founded in 1937, Players is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization whose mission is to encourage education, interest, and participation in theater and to provide quality theatrical productions for the local audiences. I believe we fulfill this mission every season. If you are not a member of Players, please consider joining. You will find a membership form, as well as other information about our theater, at our website at [sbyplayers.org](http://sbyplayers.org). I encourage you to audition for one of our upcoming shows or get involved behind the scenes. You are welcome at Players. Thank you so much for being here. I am confident you will enjoy the show.

*Matt Bogdan*

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# Director's Message

Welcome to a show that playfully merges past and present as well as hints for the future, at least for a television actor pondering a career on stage rather than in front of a camera. The past is in the present in the form of William Shakespeare's classic tragedy, *Hamlet*. If you and your family were guests on "Family Feud" and Steve Harvey said, "We surveyed 100 people and asked them, "What is the most famous Shakespeare quote?" It's a safe bet that the number one answer would be "To be or not to be; that is the question." There is, however, another famous quote in *Hamlet* and that is "This above all, to thine own self be true." It is this line, I believe, that is central to the story and characters in *I Hate Hamlet*.

TV actor Andrew Rally is having, as one character says, "a career crisis" brought on by his hasty decision to play Hamlet after his tv show has been canceled. As the play unfolds, Andrew struggles with the following questions: What is his true self as an actor, the stage or the tv screen? What is his true self as a boyfriend, the need for intimacy or the compassion for his girlfriend's uncertainty? Which of those should he "be" or strive "not to be." Most of the characters in the play, particularly the ghost of John Barrymore, push Andrew to "be" Hamlet, while a fast-talking Hollywood writer-director-producer tries to lure Andrew back to television with a mega-bucks offer for a new series. What will Andrew ultimately decide to be or not to be in order to be true to himself? You'll see—and enjoy the ride.

A brief note for those of a certain age: John Barrymore was part of the legendary Barrymore family acting dynasty. His career-defining role was indeed that of "Hamlet" on Broadway in 1922. Some audience members may not have heard of him. So, if it helps, he was Drew Barrymore's grandfather.

A New York Times Theatre Critic, described *I Hate Hamlet* as "unapologetically silly and at times hilarious." I am, of course, biased, but I believe this production delivers that description, especially given the team of actors and technical crew who made this happen. No production happens with just the actors and a director. The technical crew members are the unseen heroes who design and build a set, decorate that set, design and deliver lighting and sound to enhance the audience experience, find dozens of props, acquire and create stunning costumes—It most definitely takes a village. To all involved in this production, as well as you our supportive audience, let me end with a quote from another Shakespeare classic, *Twelfth Night*,

"Thanks, and thanks and ever thanks."

*Darrell Mullins*

## The Cast

|                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Felicia Dantine.....       | Lillian Hoffman         |
| Andrew Rally .....         | Damion Sykes            |
| Deirdre McDavey.....       | Charlie Szentesi-Thomas |
| Lillian Troy.....          | Capri Harrison          |
| John Barrymore.....        | Ryan Bass               |
| Gary Peter Lefkowitz ..... | Mark Decker             |

## Synopsis

*I Hate Hamlet* tells the story of a famous TV star, Andrew Rally, whose show has been cancelled, so he reluctantly agrees to appear in *Hamlet* in the renowned Shakespeare in the Park series in New York City. His real estate agent, who also happens to be a medium, has managed to lease the apartment which once belonged to legendary actor, John Barrymore, whose performance in *Hamlet* is considered a classic. After a séance and other comic shenanigans, Barrymore appears and offers to coach Andrew on how to best play Hamlet. Andrew is petrified to play the role and wants to decline the role but his girlfriend, resolved to maintain her virginity until she is sure that Andrew is "the one," swoons at the thought of her boyfriend playing the role. Enter Andrew's talent agent, who once had an affair with Barrymore and the stage is set for non-stop laughs. Andrew decides to accept the role, as well as Barrymore's guidance. When a Hollywood friend and producer, however, shows up with a lucrative TV offer, Andrew must decide between Shakespeare, whom his girlfriend adores, or the TV offer that comes with serious money.

## Scene

The action takes place in the late 1980s in the Greenwich Village New York apartment once owned by the famous stage and screen actor John Barrymore.

## 15 minute Intermission between Acts 1 & 2

Refreshments are available for sale in the lobby.

## Production Staff

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Director .....                     | Darrell Mullins   |
| Assistant Director.....            | Jason Bruce   |
| Producer / Lighting Designer ..... | Sharon Benchoff   |
| Stage Manager .....                | Sherri Hynes  |
| Costumes.....                      | Lynne Bratten   |
| Makeup/Wig Design.....             | Rusty Mumford   |
| Set Design .....                   | Ken Johnson   |
| Sound .....                        | Cass Dasher   |
| Props .....                        | Sammy Barnes  |
| Special Effects .....              | David Allen   |
| Fight Choreography .....           | Ringgold Cockey   |
| Stage Crew .....                   | Bobbie Calloway   |
| Set Construction/Painting .....    | Kate Adkins, David Allen,<br>Sammy Barnes, Sharon Benchoff, Holly Bruce, Jason Bruce,<br>Lily Bruce, Bobbie Calloway, Pete Cuesta, Cass Dasher,<br>Brian Lewis, Tommy Demetriou, Steve Engler, Kyle Hayes,<br>Judy Hearn, Sherri Hynes, Ken Johnson, Jean King,<br>Darrell Mullins, Danny Plaskon, Jason Plaskon,<br>Andre Scholler George Steber, Damion Sykes,<br>Charlie Szentesi-Thomas, Shelbie Thompson |
| Publicity .....                    | Kate Adkins, Pete Cuesta  |
| Programs .....                     | Tom Robinson  |
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| Concessions .....                  | Brenda Allen  |
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## Who's Who in the Cast

**Ryan Bass** (John Barrymore) studied theater at the University of Central Arkansas and was on his way to New York when fate rerouted him to the Eastern Shore, where he's spent the last 20 years. Once upon a time, Ryan played the roles of Henry II in *A Lion in Winter*, CK Dexter Haven in *The Philadelphia Story*, Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Brian Roberts in *Cabaret*, among others. *I Hate Hamlet* marks his long-awaited return to the stage.

**Mark Decker** (Gary Peter Lefkowitz) was most recently seen in the Players' production of *A Few Good Men* as Lt. Jack Ross. He first performed with Players as Emile de Becque in *South Pacific*, and has since appeared as Andre in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, Dr. Spivey in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and Pontius Pilate in *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Mark has also performed ensemble roles in *All Together Now!*, *Pericles/Shakespeare Shorts*, and in the radio show version of *It's A Wonderful Life*. He gives much love to his family who always show up to support him.

**Capri Harrison** (Lillian Troy) is in her first performance with



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## Who's Who in the Cast (continued)

Players. She hails from Ohio where she performed in high school performances of *Guys and Dolls* and *South Pacific*. In her post high school years Capri performed with the Sheffield Lake Community Theater in *Showboat*, *The King and I*, *Bye Bye Birdie* and *The Wizard of OZ* and then with the Rockville Theater's, *Black Comedy*. That was 40 years ago. Capri is thoroughly enjoying this "comeback" to the stage with new friendships and another chance to perform on stage.

**Lillian Hoffman** (Felicia Dantine) is the Director of Bands at Wicomico Middle School. As a music educator for 20 years in Wicomico County Schools, Lillian has always loved the performing arts and holds a great love for theatre. Her previous Players' musicals include *Chicago*, *Oliver*, and *Guys & Dolls*. This is her first play and she is thankful to Darrell Mullins and Jason Bruce for the opportunity. She thanks her Hamlet, Mr. Robin Hoffman, for his unconditional love and support. She feels blessed to be surrounded by such a talented cast.

**Damion Sykes** (Andrew Rally) is ecstatic to be taking the stage in



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## Who's Who in the Cast (continued)

**Damion Sykes** (Andrew Rally) is ecstatic to be taking the stage in his first leading role. They have recently worked with Players in productions of *A Few Good Men* and as titular character, Spike, in *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*. They have certainly fallen in love with the stage, connecting with their love for storytelling and dramatics. They have their family and partner, Mary, to thank for endless support and inspiration to continue finding new creative outlets to express themselves.

**Charlie Szentesi-Thomas** (Deirdre McDavey) has been acting since 2006 and became involved with Players in 2012. Notable roles include *A Laura Ingalls Wilder Christmas* (Carrie Ingalls), *Blithe Spirit* (Edith), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Fruma-Sarah), *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (Childcatcher), *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (Nina), and *The Poe Show* (Masque of the Red Death). Charlie can also be found behind the scenes, including *Leading Ladies* (Dresser/Stage Crew), *Crimes of the Heart* (Assistant Stage Manager), and *Rumors* (Stage Manager). Charlie most recently appeared in *A Few Good Men* (Sam Weinberg).

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## Who's Who Behind the Scenes

**Darrell Mullins** (Director) is happy to be back in the Director's Chair for this zany comedy. He has directed a number of productions for Community Players. Among his favorites are *Little Women*, *The Musical*, *The Dining Room*, *Chicago*, and *Hello, Dolly*. Darrell has also played a number of roles for Community Players, including *Death of a Salesman*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *The Odd Couple*, and *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. His most recent performance was in last *A Few Good Men*. Darrell wishes to thank an amazing cast and crew of *I Hate Hamlet*. They truly make the magic happen.

**Jason Bruce** (Assistant Director) is excited to be in his first show on the "other side of the table" as assistant director. He would like to thank Darrell Mullins profusely for this opportunity. He has been previously seen onstage as McMurphy in *Cuckoo's Nest*, Preston in *Hate Mail*, Peter in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Stanley Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Kendrick in *A Few Good Men*, as well as the Special Productions of *Poe*, *Pooh*, *Twain*, and *Paths to Freedom*. Holly and Lily: Love ya both!



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## Who's Who Behind the Scenes (continued)

**Sharon Benchoff** (Producer, Lighting Designer) returns to her first love in theatre: lighting. She has been designing lighting for Players for decades. Some of her favorites as lighting designer are *Into the Woods*, *Chicago*, *The Dining Room* and most recently, *A Few Good Men*. Directing credits include *Wait Until Dark*, *Laughing Stock*, *Les Misérables*, *Calendar Girls*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and most recently, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*. Sharon is enjoying her role as producer for Darrell and the cast and crew. It is always a great time.

**Sherri Hynes** (Stage Manager) has been a member of Players basically her whole life, having been in her first show when she was 10 years old. She's happy to return to backstage; however, it's been a while since she was a stage manager and hopes the things that go "bump in the night" are supposed to!! Sherri is known to Players' audiences for her many acting roles and as a director for such memorable shows as *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Jekyll and Hyde* and most recently *Guys and Dolls*.

**Ken Johnson** (Set Designer) has been designing and building sets for Players for more decades than he would like to think about. Some of the audience favorite set designs include *Into the Woods*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Beauty and the Beast*. Besides his daytime job of teaching Wicomico County high school students the joys of theatre, in his spare time he also acts, designs lighting and directs shows for Players. Just a few directing credits include *Addams Family*, *Noises Off* and *The Wizard of Oz*. Recent roles include King Herod in *Jesus Christ Superstar* and Arvide Abernathy in *Guys and Dolls*.



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# Who's Who Behind the Scenes (continued)

**Lynne Bratten** (Costumes) has created and coordinated costumes for Players since 1984. Recent productions include *Guys and Dolls*, *Little Women*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Matilda*, *South Pacific*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Drowsy Chaperone*, *Into the Woods*, *Calendar Girls*, and many others. She is thrilled to manage the ever-expanding costume collection for Community Players and to serve the organization as a member of board of directors as the vision of our own theater is becoming a reality.

**Cass Dasher** (Sound) has been involved in the technical side of theater with Community Players of Salisbury since joining the stage crew for *Addams Family* in 2015. They have worn a number of hats in that time, from lights to sound to props, frequently acting as Stage Manager for Community Players' shows, including *The Dining Room* (also directed by Darrell Mullins) and last fall's musical *Guys and Dolls*, and also as Assistant Director for 2022's *Little Women*. By day, Cass works for the Worcester County Library and serves on the board of Salisbury PFLAG. As always, thanks to Alyssa for her constant support.

**David Allen** (Special Effects) joined the family of Players in the fall of 1993, helping with lighting in *Oklahoma!*. Over the years he has been involved as a board member, vice president, president, and stage manager, as well as helping with set building, lighting, sound, special effects, ticket sales, the man in a boat during the tornado in *The Wizard of Oz* and famously made it rain on stage for *Singing in the Rain*. David also has devoted time to local community arts productions and events with the Salisbury Wicomico Arts Council, Eastern Shore Ballet Theatre, local schools and various other community groups over the years. David wishes to thank his wife, Brenda, for her infinite patience with all of the hours that he spends on his "hobbies".

## Community Players Officers

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| Vice-President .....           | Darrell Mullins |
| Recording Secretary .....      | Melissa Dasher  |
| Corresponding Secretary .....  | Rusty Mumford   |
| Treasurer .....                | Charlie Linton  |
| Immediate Past President ..... | Tom Robinson    |

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David Allen, Kim Cuesta, Charlie Szentesi-Thomas - Term Expires 2027

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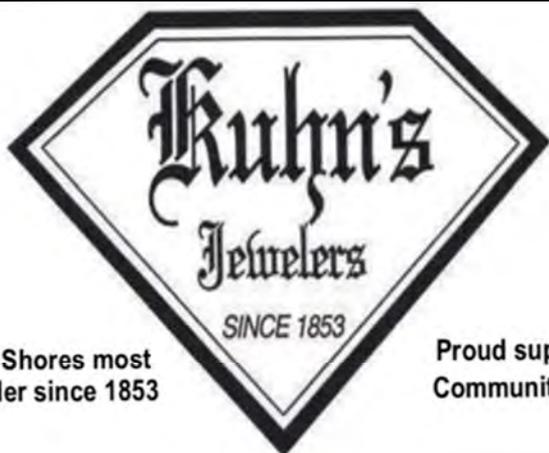
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# Community Players



## Auditions

Tuesday, April 15 and  
Wednesday, April 16 at 7:00 PM  
at Community Players,  
5109 Nutters Cross Road,  
Salisbury 21804

[www.SBYplayers.org](http://www.SBYplayers.org) for more information

## Performances

Saturday, June 14 at 2:00 & 7:30 PM  
Sunday, June 15 at 2:00 PM  
Friday, June 20 at 7:30 PM,  
Saturday, June 21 at 2:00 & 7:30 PM  
Sunday, June 22 at 2:00 PM

For tickets and information  
go to [www.SBYplayers.org](http://www.SBYplayers.org)

At Community Players Theater  
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