

The GMU Players present

# The Great Theatre of the World



by  
Calderon de la Barca\*

Translated & Directed by Rick Davis

\*The Greatest Playwright of the Spanish Golden Age

## FROM THE DIRECTOR...

Ever since humanity began acting out stories-- and explicitly since Shakespeare said, in many ways in many plays, "all the world's a stage"-- we have been fascinated by the notion that our lives are a kind of performance. Once that metaphor is established, the interesting questions can start being asked: A performance written by whom? For what audience? Who are the critics who will write our reviews? What's the definition of a leading role? Why didn't I get the part I wanted? Is the play going to turn out to be a comedy, a tragedy, a melodrama, or something unforeseen and new? How does it end?

Calderón de la Barca was a master of this metaphor, and in *The Great Theater of the World* he explores it to the fullest, with his characteristic mix of metaphysics, whimsy, wit, and ultimate belief in a divine Author whose project is to stage a "simple comedy of human life." It's interesting that this Author doesn't write out the parts word for word, but simply casts the roles, provides the proper costumes, and turns the actors loose to see what they will do, how they will express their newfound humanity. In this way, Calderón's play easily makes the leap from his own deeply-felt 17th century Catholicism to a more universal exploration of the notion of what it means to be alive and in possession of the power to act in the world. That question seems an important one, and worthy of consideration through whatever lens is available to us.

The original play is written in highly organized verse that, characteristic of Golden Age drama, takes on several different forms according to the situation. In translating the text, I have chosen a very loose version of blank verse that, I hope, also adapts its verbal level to the needs of the moment, while not attempting to match Calderón's versification stanza for stanza.

In conceiving the production, the designers, composer, choreographer and I have employed a kind of whimsical eclecticism, in pursuit of the notion that the theatrical metaphor-- "all the world's a stage"-- is present on earth in every place and at all times. We have added physical embodiments of the World's powers that we are calling The Elements-- they are the earth's adept stagehands and special effects providers. And where Calderón calls for "una voz" to call out to the mortal actors, we have formed a trio. Otherwise, all the dialogue and action is intended to be as close to the spirit of the original as we could imagine.

We thank you for coming and hope you enjoy the journey.

Rick Davis

*The GMU Players Present*

***The Great Theater  
of the World***

*By Calderon de la Barca*

*Translated and Directed by RICK DAVIS*

*Set Design EILEEN DALY*

*Costume Design KATHLEEN McGHEE*

*Lighting Design BETHANY THOMPSON*

*Composer RACHEL SARRANO*

*Movement Stylist LOREN LIVICK*

*Stage Manager ASHLEIGH STEVENS*

## Cast

Author	Julia Wiedeman
World	David Burns
King	Brandon Mace
Discretion	Bettiann King
Law of Grace	Erica Wilmore
Beauty	Marisa Davison
Richman	Robert Winter
Worker	Josh McCarthy
Beggar	Maria Rio
Child	Taylor Coffman
Voice	Kylie Johnston
Voice	Sky Adams
Voice	Laura Kozakowski
Element (Fire)	Jessica Belan
Element (Water)	Rachel Hutchinson
Element (Earth)	Zach Myers
Element (Air)	Chris Webb
Harp	Molly McClain
Piano	Rachel Sarrano

## Production and Artistic Staff

Assistant Director	Steve Fillmore
Assistant Stage Manager	Liz Stock
Assistant Stage Manager	Sean Corcoran
Assistant Technical Director	Christian Hershey
Props Master	Patrick Knee
Hair Stylist	Taylor Coffman
Master Electrician	Lauren Brownson
Master Electrician	Lyle Crain
Light Board Operator	Robert Recter
Deck Crew	Dan Guy, Deidre Dunford, Nicholas Ryckert
Wardrobe Crew	Lisa Ethington, Susan Abernathy

## Production Crews

### Costume Shop

Cat Buchanan, Chantee Hale, Suzanne Maloney,  
Kathleen, McGhee, Maria Smith

### Scene Shop

Sola Kalejaiye, Mario Loundermon, Jennica Nishida,  
Elizabeth Replogle, Neal Raina, Caitlin Rodel, Vivian Woodland,  
Leah Harmon, A.J. Good, Nicholas Ryckert, Colby Thorton,  
Michael Prater, Taylor Coffman, Stephen Lopez, Molly McClain,  
Brian Patterson, George Aubrey, Brian Wenham, Laura Rozmeski,

### Electrics

Elizabeth Replogle, Steve Fillmore, Sky Adamlo, Molly McClain,  
Micheal Edward Staley, Marisa Davison, Nicholas Ryckert,  
Gregory Desterhaus, Raymond Friedman, Sharon Delguadio,  
Jim Miwurm

**Clayton Austin (Technical Director)** has been a faculty member with the GMU Theater division since 1993. Clayton is a product of the summer stock and regional theater system, having worked at the Barnstormers, the Barter Theater, Trinity Square Repertory Company, Hartford Stage Company, and Berkley Repertory Theater. Clayton received an M.F.A. in Technical Design and Production from the Yale School of Drama.

**Jessica Belan (Fire)** is a graduating senior at George Mason. She has spent her years doing technical work as well as acting. She was seen as a Lady in Waiting in *Once Upon a Mattress*, and as Maggy Burroughs in *Joined at the Head*. I would like to thank my family for supporting me through my absence and my incredibly supportive boyfriend Rob, who enriches my life at every moment. I would also like to thank the members of the cast and crew for making this show, the *Great Theater of the World*.

**David Burns (World)** is a junior-year transfer student making his George Mason debut. He previously studied at DePaul University where he appeared in workshop productions of *Antigone*, *The Rimers of Eldritch*, and *Fool for Love*. Much love and thanks to family and Rachel.

**Taylor Coffman (Child)** is an actress and student, currently pursuing a BA in Theater. This is Taylor's third project with Mr. Davis, after performing as Hilda in TFA's *The Lady From the Sea* and in Sherry Kramer's First Light Festival piece, *The Ruling Passion*. Taylor was last seen with the GMU Players as Germaine in *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*. Other roles include: *Once Upon a Mattress* (Larken), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Hero), *The Good Person of Setzuan* (Mrs. Mi Tzu) and *DreamGirl* (Mrs. Allerton). She was also a proud cast member of Mason's 1999 *Vagina Monologues*. Taylor wishes to thank her family, Matt, Rick, and the terrific cast and crew!

**Eileen E. Daly (Set Designer)** As a freelance Set Designer, Eileen has worked locally with Rorschach Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company's Outreach Program, Theater J, and Solid Films. Properties Designs and fabrications include work for Theater of the First Amendment, Olney Theatre, Rep Stage and the Wolf Trap Opera Company.

**Marisa K. Davison (Beauty)** is a freshman at GMU and is excited to be making her debut on the Harris Stage. A graduate of the American School of Paris, she has had opportunities for professional work and created the voice of Anne Frank in the Animated film: *Dairy of Anne Frank*. She also appeared in the world premier of *The Vase* in Paris. She sends much love and many thanks to her friends and family, near and far.

**Calderón de la Barca (Playwright, 1600-81)** is considered to be the finest dramatist of a fine age, the renowned "Siglo de Oro" in Spain, which also brought the world such luminaries as Miguel de Cervantes, Lope de Vega, and Tirso de Molina. Calderón's most famous play is *Life is a Dream*, 1636, and his prodigious output-- some say he wrote more than 200 plays--includes cape-and-sword comedies, tragedies of honor, and plays on metaphysical and religious themes called "autos sacramentales" of which *The Great Theater of the World* (written in the 1640s) is an example.

**Rick Davis (Translator and Director)** has staged *The Bacchae*, *Hedda Gabler*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Into the Woods* for the GMU Players, and has also designed scenery or lighting for several of the group's productions, most recently *Agamemnon*. He is Associate Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts, Professor of Theater, and Artistic Director of Theater of the First Amendment and Center for the Arts. He also enjoys freelance directing, most recently the premiere of *A Light in the Storm* by Mary Hall Surface for the Kennedy Center. He worked for six seasons at Baltimore's Center Stage before joining GMU in 1991. His translation of Calderon's *The Phantom Lady* was performed by the Bowman Ensemble in Baltimore in 1992. Rick received his M.F.A. from the Yale School of Drama in 1983.

**Steve Fillmore (Assistant Director)** This is Steve's second semester here at George Mason, where he is currently seeking a double major in Theater and English. Steve made his college acting debut in the Player's production of *A Shayna Maidel* and has since gone to the "dark side" (for a little while). His last function was costume designer for the Player's production of *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, but as we all know, he'll be back on the stage again soon (hopefully). Thanks to Rick for the learning experience, Mom and Dad for having children, Liz for her support, and to God. Love to them all.

**Rachel Hutchison (Water)** is very happy to be in her last semester at GMU. She has been in various productions, most recently Rose in *A Shayna Maidel*. Thank you David.

**Kylie Johnston (Voice)** enjoys sparkly things and singing people to their deaths...so it stands to reason that she is enjoying this show. She has very recently appeared in Bernstein's *Mass* and would like to tell her favorite geek that he is on "Candid Clothespin".

**Bettiann King (Discretion)** will be graduating in May with a BA in Theater with a minor in Dance. She is very happy to be in this production, and was previously seen in *Agamemnon*, *7 Acts of Passion*, and last year's production of *The Vagina Monologues*. She would like to thank her parents for all their love and support, especially in the last 4 years.

**Laura Kozakowski (Voice)** This is Laura's debut to the stage since her arrival at George Mason University. She is in the second semester of her freshman year and is currently majoring in English. Laura is thoroughly enjoying this "sparkling" experience and plans to try more Truth or Dare auditions in the future.

**Loren Livick (Movement Stylist)**, a senior dance major, has enjoyed integrating her theater and dance passions for this production. After transferring from Emerson College, she has been fortunate enough to perform with both the theater and dance departments. She has been seen in the GMU Player's production *Twelve Dreams* and the GMU Dance Company's Fall Concert. Loren looks forward to graduating this summer in order to pursue a life of acrobatics, dance, and theater in a tropical climate.

**Brandon R. Mace (the King)** is pleased to be performing with this wonderful cast for his first production with the GMU players. Prior to this show, Brandon has performed at several local Dinner Theaters. Favorite roles include Joseph in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Huck Finn in *Big River*, and Danny Zuko in *Grease*. After *Great Theater* he will be playing Wayne in *State Fair* at the Lazy Susan Dinner Theater. Special Thanks to his wife Krissi for all the love and support.

**Josh McCarthy (Worker)** is making what may be his final GMU Players production. Josh has appeared in several GMU Players productions in the past such as *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *A Doll House*, *Iago's Plot*, and *Rivers and Ravines*, to name a few. In addition, Josh has worked on *Silence and Darkness* (Cyburbia Productions) and had worked behind the scenes on several area movies. Josh would like to thank all his friends, family, and Cindy for being wonderful.

**Molly McClain (Harpist)** I am a Chemistry graduate studying Theater here at GMU. I hope to go into Opera Set Design. I would like to thank Rachel, the composer of my harp music, and all the wonderful musicians, cast, and crew that I have had the pleasure of working with.

**Kathleen McGhee (Costume Designer)** has served as manager of the GMU Costume Shop since the Fall of 1999. Prior to that she spent 10 years in costume design and construction and managed two costume shops in the Twin cities, Minnesota theater and ballet communities. *Great Theater of the World* is her first GMU production for which she has designed costumes. She also has Bachelor and Masters degrees in music, and works as a pianist and harpist in the DC area.

**Zach Myers (Earth)** is very excited about working in this production. You may have already seen him starring in his break-out role as Ensemble Actor #4 in GMU's Fall performance of *Joined at the Head*. As a wide-eyed freshman Patriot, Zach enjoys dancing for friends, dinners for one, and working on outside movies. He hopes to graduate from GMU within his self allotted time period of 14 years and enter into the challenging world of the Performing Arts.



**Maria Rio (Beggar)** is “encantada” to be an “actorino” in this production. Thanks to everyone from the Star who came out to support me. Thanks to Rick and Senor Calderon.

**Rachel Sarrano (Composer)** is in her second year at George Mason, pursuing a BA in Theater and English with a minor in music. She has previously worked in the Orchestra Pit for the GMU Player’s production of *Once Upon a Mattress*, and with the Wardrobe crew for *A Shayna Maidel*. She would like to thank her mom, dad, and Ted for being so supportive of her musical and theatrical pursuits.

**Liz Stock (Assistant Stage Manager)** is very happy to be working on her first main stage production here at GMU. She is a second year student who loves working on all of the technical aspects of theater, especially stage-managing. She wants to thank her parents especially for always being there and supporting her. She also wants to thank Colleen, Steve, and Conor simply for always standing by her and just being there for her.

**Bethany Thompson (Lighting Design)** is very happy to have been able to work on Great Theater with such a wonderful group of people. Thanks to all the people who helped so much, especially to the Master Electricians, Adriana, Tim Chew, her boyfriend Nathan, and her parents.

**Christopher Webb (Wind)** is excited to have this opportunity to perform in his second show here at George Mason and in his first Mainstage production. Although Chris is studying Theater, he plans on directing films in the future, both near and far. Chris would also like to thank his parents for all of the opportunities that have been provided to him. Enjoy the Show!

**Julia Wiedeman (Author)**, a proud member of the GMU Players for all of her four years at Mason, is honored to be an omnipotent part of this world premier production. Other momentous theatrical events for Julia include the role of Jester in *Once Upon a Mattress*, choreographing *Runaways: The Musical*, and directing both *Death: A Night with Woody* and *Joined at the Head*, to name a few. She adores those who adore her y por supuesto gracias a mi director y a mis amigos.

**Erica Wilmore (Law of Grace)** This is my senior year at Mason and I am excited to be graduating. I am also proud to be taking part in my third GMU Players production, this time as both an actor and a musician. I had the privilege of being in the previous productions of *Runaways* and *Into the Woods*. I’m and English and Music Education Major with a vocal/choral emphasis.

**Robert Roy Winter (Richman)** is a senior Theater Major making his George Mason acting debut. After a 6 year sabbatical, he would like to thank Jess, his muse, for rekindling his flame for acting. He also thanks his parents for their patience and understanding in his attempts in creativity and enterprise. Lastly, He thanks any audience member who enjoyed his performance.

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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 2002.

Last year more than 1,200 productions and 198,000 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.