

Starkville Community  
Theatre presents

# terror by gaslight

by tim kelly

directed by Lyle Tate

february 23-26 and february 28-march 4, 2006



*Terror by Gaslight* is underwritten by a special grant from the  
Starkville Area Arts Council

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## cast

(in order of appearance)

Dr. Cyrus Norton .....Andrew Watkins  
Opal .....Carol McSweeney\*  
Dr. Charles Withers.....Brian Hawkins  
Dr. William Dover.....Casey Rowe\*  
Dr. Marilyn Norton .....Heather Shaw\*  
Constance Norton.....Cherri Golden\*  
Leonard Scrubbs.....Kary Rogers\*  
Gin Hester .....Terry Reese McDowell  
Edward Daniels .....Thomas La Foe  
Kitty .....Marianne Ulmer  
Mrs. Culp .....Bonnie Oppenheimer\*  
Detective Harrison .....Ty Phillips

*\*SCT acting debut*

## scenes & setting

1829 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
in the Private School of Anatomy of Dr. Cyrus Norton

### Act One

Scene i .. an evening in October  
Scene ii .. the following morning  
Scene iii .. that evening

### Act Two

Scene i .. a few days later, morning  
Scene ii .. that night  
Scene iii .. two nights later

There will be a 10-minute intermission between acts.

## crew

director..... Lyle Tate  
assistant director/stage manager ..... Ellen Triggs  
stagehand/properties..... Natalie Kern  
lights/sound ..... Dave Pitalo &  
Jonette Wilburn  
lighting design ..... Thomas La Foe &  
Dave Pitalo  
hair and makeup design ..... Jansen Fair  
box office..... Marsha Williams  
house manager coordinator..... Ron Palmer  
poster design..... Lyle Tate, Pattye Archer,  
Jim Tomlinson

## costumes

Pattye Archer (coordinator), Elizabeth Batisse,  
Debra Fairbrother, Faye Fulgham, Cherri Golden, Paula Mabry  
Cindy Ruff, Betty Self, and Marianne Ulmer

## set construction

Cherri Golden, Madeline Golden, Brian Hawkins, Kaki Ingels,  
Natalie Kern, Thomas La Foe, Ty Phillips, Dave Pitalo,  
Ledge McDowell, Terry Reese McDowell, Carol McSweeney,  
Bonnie Oppenheimer, Seth Oppenheimer, Ron Palmer, Kary  
Rogers, Casey Rowe, Paul Ruff, Lyle Tate, Ellen Triggs,  
Marianne Ulmer, and Andrew Watkins

## special thanks

Bob Anderson; Pattye Archer; Ann Bonner;  
Ginger DeWeese, John Tomlinson & MSU Governmental Relations;  
Dr. Walter Diehl, Dr. Gay Williamson & MSU Dept. of Biological Sciences;  
Edwin Ellis; Evelyn Johnson & Golden Triangle Fabric Center;  
Kevin Kern & MSU Blackfriars; House of Tux;  
Thomas La Foe, Ty Phillips & Dave Pitalo;  
Evelyn Lowery; Paula Mabry; MSU Libraries; Dr. Paul Ruff;  
Starkville Area Arts Council; Marcus Vowell; & Dr. Robert Wolverton, Sr.

## about the cast

**Cherri Golden** (*Constance Norton*) is appearing in her first speaking part in a play... but this is her second time to appear on the SCT stage. She sang with the cast of the 2005 summer musical revue, *Now Showing... SCT Goes to the Movies!* She work for USDA APHIS Wildlife Services on the MSU campus and dabbles in hat making and collecting. Cherri would like to thank Lyle for giving her the opportunity to play the part of "Constance." She would also like to thank the cast and crew of *Terror by Gaslight* for being such a great bunch of people and for making her first play a wonderful experience!

**Brian Hawkins** (*Dr. Charles Withers*) is making his 11<sup>th</sup> onstage appearance at the Playhouse on Main. Brian's most recent SCT appearances were in *Now Showing... SCT Goes to the Movies!* and the 2004/05 season finale, *Communicating Doors*. When not indulging his flair for the dramatic on the SCT stage, Brian works as managing editor of the *Starkville Daily News* and is a member of Starkville First United Methodist Church, where he sings in the chancel choir. Brian thanks Lyle, Ellen, and the crew for their hard work and vision in making this production such an enjoyable one; his cast mates (especially Terry, Cherri, Andrew, and Heather) for lots of laughs and help in learning lines; his co-workers for their support and hard work; and his friends and family for never-ending love and support. "This one's for you!"

**Thomas La Foe** (*Edward Daniels*) is glad to be returning to a regular-season "straight" show. Others of which he has been a part include *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *The Foreigner*, numerous summer musical revues, and last season's *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*. When not working either onstage or backstage, Thomas is an Instructional Technology Specialist for MSU Libraries.

**Terry Reese McDowell** (*Gin Hester*) has been an active member of SCT for over 20 years. She is a native of the Sessums community, still residing there on her family's orchard. "Working with such a talented director, cast, and crew has made this rehearsal time a real blast. It has been a privilege to work with old & new friends. Playing the role of 'Gin Hester' has really reminded me of why I enjoy this time-spending hobby." In her real life, Terry is a veteran 2<sup>nd</sup>-grade teacher and lives with the love of her life, her husband, Ledge. She is the mother of three grown sons: Ledge, Sy, and Matt.

## about the cast

**Carol McSweeney** (*Opal*) is a 16-year-old sophomore at Columbus High School and began acting at the young age of 8 when she was cast in the role of "Piglet" in *Winnie the Pooh*. Since then she has appeared in numerous plays and musicals and most recently attended the New York Film Academy's summer classes in Orlando, FL. This is Carol's first SCT production, and she feels honored to be a part of such an amazing cast.

**Bonnie Oppenheimer** (*Mrs. Culp*) is a veteran of around 30 musicals around the nation, but, having once ventured out of the orchestra pit, she finds the stage alluring as well. She has performed in the last three summer musical revues at SCT, but this is her first "real" show ("Sorry, Pattye!"). Dr. Oppenheimer is an associate professor of mathematics at MUW, and the rest of the cast enjoys watching her grade papers backstage. "I remain in awe of the rest of my cast members, and I heartily apologize for never working on the set!" She wishes to thank her husband, Seth, who first had the courage to climb on the stage, and her children, Albert & Kate, both of whom have more onstage experience than she does! ("Albert has now performed for George Lucas....")

**Ty Phillips** (*Detective Harrison*) has been active with SCT for a number of years, both on- and off-stage. His most recent onstage performances were in last season's *Moon Over Buffalo* and *Communicating Doors*. Ty is excited to be a part of *Terror by Gaslight* and would like to thank his fellow cast mates, the backstage crew (Natalie & Jansen), and Ellen and Lyle for all their time and talent and for making this experience so enjoyable. "I hope everyone enjoys this show as much as we have enjoyed producing it."

**Kary Rogers** (*Leonard Scrubbs*) is excited to return for his 2<sup>nd</sup> production at SCT after his first time on the stage in last summer's musical revue. He has enjoyed the experience of playing a grave robber but insists that he did no role research in the local cemeteries, no matter what one might read in the paper. Kary would like to thank Lyle, Ellen, the cast, and the crew for making the adventure so much fun. "As always, thanks to my lovely wife for letting me play with the other kids on stage."

## about the cast

**Casey Rowe** (*Dr. William Dover*) is making his first appearance on the Playhouse stage, but he has acted in numerous musicals at Starkville Academy (*Annie, How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, Anything Goes, Calamity Jane*, and two one-acts: *Age of Leisure* and *The Ugly Duckling*). He is currently rehearsing in the musical *Honk!* Casey is vice-president of the SA Thespian Society, and is on the speech team. He serves as representative on SA's school council, and recently ran for vice-president of the Mississippi Private School Association.

**Heather Shaw** (*Dr. Marilyn Norton*) is new to the SCT stage, having worked backstage during *Communicating Doors* in 2005. Her first role was as "Shelby" in the Eupora BLY Fine Arts production of *Steel Magnolias* in 2002. She would like to thank all of SCT for taking her in so graciously and allowing her this opportunity. "I have been chosen to perform with some of the absolute best and am beyond grateful." Also, an enormous thank-you goes out to all of her friends and family who have been her "backbone" in this production. "Thank you—you know who you are—for believing in me."

**Marianne Ulmer** (*Kitty*) was last seen in SCT's fall production of *Seeing Stars in Dixie*. She has been an active member of SCT for over 20 years and currently serves on the theatre's Board of Directors. During the past few weeks of rehearsal, she has made some great new friends and has enjoyed spending time with several old friends. "This show is for 'Tay!' She finally gets to do what she has been threatening to do for years! Many thanks to Lyle and Ellen for making this such a smooth ride."

**Andrew Watkins** (*Dr. Cyrus Norton*) is pleased to return to the SCT stage as "Dr. Cyrus Norton." Last seen on the Playhouse stage as "George" in the 2004/05 season's production of *Moon Over Buffalo*, he has been involved with SCT for over a decade in various capacities—from assistant directing to lighting/sound technician and many roles in between. In real life, Andrew recently completed his PhD in Computer Science from the University of Kent, UK, and works as a Research Associate in the GeoResources Institute at MSU and as a lecturer in the Department of Computer Science & Engineering. Andrew would like to thank the cast & crew of *Terror by Gaslight* for making this such a terrifyingly memorable and wonderful experience. He sends a special word of gratitude to Lyle & Ellen for giving him this opportunity: "There's really nothing greater than doing something you love with those you love the most." Finally, he would like to thank his wife, Molly, for putting up with the late nights of rehearsal, the last-minute reviewing of lines, and the general ups-and-downs that are a part of any production.

## from the director

"Nine-tenths of the world's people were created so that you'd want to be with the other tenth." .. Horace Walpole

I am so lucky that I get to work and play with this special tenth percent every single night here at the Playhouse on Main. Having SCT as an outlet for creativity, as a venue for celebration of theatre and the arts, and as a place to call my home away from home is a great joy and privilege. I am especially grateful to a handful of people who have helped not only to bring my vision for this production to life but to keep me sane and grounded these past many weeks.

Paul Ruff... My designer, my workday organizer, my friend... I truly believe that you and I can accomplish anything. Thank you for your dedication to this production and your dedication to you and me. It's been an honor to work each night on the world you've created.

Patty Archer... Thank you for stepping up and helming the costuming of this production. You are the paint on *Terror's* canvas, my friend, and I appreciate your work—but mostly you—very much.

The cast & crew of *Terror*... I am pleased to be able to say that 6 of the 12-member cast you'll see onstage tonight are making their regular season debut with *Terror by Gaslight*. One of the best aspects of SCT, I've always felt, is its openness to and welcoming of new and exciting talent, and I am pleased to present 6 new faces to you tonight. Alongside these new faces are ones of amazing SCT veterans with whom I've enjoyed working not only these past few weeks but for eight years now. Cast & crew, you've made my job as director so very easy. No one could ask for a more dedicated, talented, and enthusiastic company, and for that I am truly appreciative. You've made my foray back into the director's seat an easy and enjoyable transition. Thanks for the laughs, the hard work, and the hours of sweat and study that go into what our audience sees tonight. You are my friends and my family.

And to Ellen Peyton... Thank you for always saying, "Yes, we can do that," for being two steps ahead of me the entire time, for keeping up with how much I've spent on what (and believe me, I know that ain't easy), for talking through the show with me each night, for sharing this vision and journey with me, for getting mad & agitated at things so I didn't have to, for taking the reins so masterfully backstage, and for being, simply, my best friend. Not only could I not have done my part without you, I wouldn't have even tried. Together, we're unstoppable.

Lyle Tate

# an excerpt

*Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers* by Mary Roach (New York: Norton & Co., 2003.)

"In attempting to cope with the shortage of cadavers legally available for dissection, instructors at British and early American anatomy schools backed themselves into some unsavory corners. They became known as the kind of guys to whom you could take your son's amputated leg and sell it for beer money (37½ cents, to be exact; it happened in Rochester, New York, in 1831). But students weren't going to pay tuition to learn arm and leg anatomy; the schools had to find whole cadavers or risk losing their students to the anatomy schools of Paris, where the unclaimed corpses of the poor who died at city hospitals could be used for dissection.

By 1828, the demands of London's anatomy schools were such that ten full-time body snatchers and two hundred or so part-timers were kept busy throughout the dissecting "season." (Anatomy courses were held only between October and May, to avoid the stench and swiftness of summertime decomposition.)

It was an Edinburgh anatomist named Robert Knox who instigated anatomy's fatal PR blunder: the implicit sanctioning of murder for medicine. In 1828, one of Knox's assistants answered the door to find a pair of strangers in the courtyard with a cadaver at their feet. This was business as usual for anatomists of the day, and so Knox invited the men in. Although the men—William Burke & William Hare—were strangers, he cheerfully bought the body and accepted their story that the cadaver's relatives had made the body available for sale.

The body, it turns out, had been a lodger at a boardinghouse run by Hare and his wife. The man died in one of Hare's beds, and, being dead, was unable to come up with the money he owed for the nights he'd stayed. Hare wasn't one to forgive a debt, so he came up with what he thought to be a fair solution: He and Burke would haul the body to one of those anatomists they'd heard about. There they would sell it, kindly giving the lodger the opportunity, in death, to pay off what he'd neglected to in life.

When Burke & Hare found out how much money could be made selling corpses, they set about creating some of their own. Several weeks later, a down-and-out alcoholic took ill with fever while staying at Hare's flophouse. Figuring the man to be well on his way to cadaverdom anyway, the men decided to speed things along.

Hare pressed a pillow to the man's face while Burke laid his considerable body weight on top of him. Knox asked no questions and encouraged the men to come back soon. And they did, some fifteen times.

For his part, William Burke was eventually brought to justice. A crowd of more than 25,000 watched him hang. Hare was granted immunity, much to the disgust of the gallows crowd. In a lovely sliver of poetic justice, Burke's corpse was, in keeping with the law of the day, dissected. The post-dissection cadaver was, by order of the judge, shipped to the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh to have its bones made into a skeleton, which resides there to this day, along with one of several wallets made from Burke's skin.

When an inquiry by a lay committee into Knox's role generated no formal action against the doctor, a mob gathered the following day with an effigy of Knox. The stuffed Knox was paraded through the streets to the house of the real Knox, where it was hung by its neck from a tree and then cut down and—fittingly—torn to pieces."

## the music of terror by gaslight

"Pensieri, voi mi tormentate"

"Ah! crudel"

"D'una torbida sorgente"

"To fleeting pleasures make your court"

Composed by George Frideric Handel

Performed by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment  
with Renee Fleming, soprano

"Misere Mei"

Composed by Frank Peterson

Performed by the Prague Symphony Orchestra  
with The Bach Choir

"Adagio, for violin, strings & organ in G minor"

Composed by Tomaso Albinoni

Performed by the English National Orchestra

"Symphony no. 7 in A major, Op. 92"

Composed by Ludwig von Beethoven

Performed by the Prague Symphony Orchestra

*Terror by Gaslight* is produced by special arrangement  
with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

## new dates for final show

The show dates for SCT's final show of the 2005-2006 season have changed! *Smoke on the Mountain*, a musical comedy, will now open on Thursday, April 20 and will run for 10 public performances. Show dates and times are:

Thursday, April 20 .....	7:30 p.m.
Friday, April 21 .....	7:30 p.m.
Friday, April 28.....	7:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 29.....	7:30 p.m.
Sunday, April 30 .....	2:00 p.m.
Tuesday, May 2.....	7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, May 3 .....	7:30 p.m.
Thursday, May 4.....	7:30 p.m.
Friday, May 5.....	7:30 p.m.
Saturday, May 6.....	7:30 p.m.

## reserved seating system

SCT is pleased to offer its new Reserved Seating System for the first time during the production of *Terror by Gaslight*. Approved by the theatre's Board of Directors in the fall, the Reserved Seating System is being taken out for a "test drive" during the run of *Terror* and the season's final show, *Smoke on the Mountain*. The Board will evaluate its success following the end of the season.

- Remember you must call or e-mail the box office to reserve space in the theatre.
- You must call for each production. No seats will be reserved for more than one production at a time.
- Once you receive a confirmation on your call, a space will be yours. Only when you have paid for the space will a designated seat be yours.
- If you hold a season's ticket, you have already paid for a space at each of our shows!
- Call EARLY! Your chances of getting what you want will be better!!

in memoriam ~ joe cardwell

Starkville Community Theatre would like to thank Leota Cardwell for her generous gift of \$3,000, given in memory of her husband Joe Cardwell. The gift has upgraded our sound system to state-of-the-art. The newly-upgraded system is being used for the first time during the production of *Terror by Gaslight*. Not only will we benefit on stage but also those of you who enjoy using the assisted listening devices will hear a vast improvement. Our heartfelt thanks to the Cardwell family who have been instrumental in providing all of the sound equipment used here in the Playhouse!

special thanks to arts council

SCT's third production, *Terror by Gaslight*, is underwritten by a special grant from the Starkville Area Arts Council. In addition to underwriting the show, SAAC's Board of Directors hosted the show's opening night party on Thursday, February 23. Starkville Community Theatre is grateful to the arts council for their continued support! The Starkville Area Arts Council is doing great things in our community, and we are proud to be a part of that!

## **A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum**

April 6, 7, 8 at 7:30  
Directed by Kevin P. Kern

Recommended for everyone, this Broadway smash and multiple Tony winner now comes to McComas Hall with a live orchestra, a cast of 20, and silliness to spare. Boy meets girl, then boy loses girl, and its up to the servants to put things in order before the closing number. With music from Stephen Sondheim, (*Sweeney Todd*, *Into The Woods*) and book by Larry Gelbart (*M\*A\*S\*H\**) this show has literally; "...something for everyone"

The McComas Hall Theatre

science is a stern master



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