



PSYCHO BEACH PARTY

By Charles Busch Directed by Paul Conroy

MAY 2-18, 2024

#OutFrontPsychoBeach



Production Sponsors Rob Dean and Rob Epstein SOUTHEASTERN HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING BOYNEXTDOOR MEN'S WEAR POSITIVE IMPACT HEALTH CARE

www.OutFrontTheatre.com

A Note from Paul



The idea of the typical American teenager has changed a lot over the decades, but somehow that image we all have in our minds has traits that stay the same from generation to generation. That image is, of course, influenced by the movies, television and music from when we were younger, and we were those “typical American teenagers.” Of course, we can also pinpoint what a “typical American teenager” from a time other than ours is based on the media of those generations.

All of that to say, no one is typical. Some of us spent summers at the beach, while others were working away at malt shops or some other job. Some of us found love under the stars, and some of us suffered from severe mental disorders that caused us to rampage through our communities as we wreaked havoc and caused panic and horror at every turn... See, no one is typical.

I’m thankful that Charles Busch isn’t a typical playwright. He’s been creating offbeat stories for well over 40 years and, as quirky as they are, they still feel familiar. Even when working with a convention we all know at first sight, he finds a way to twist and turn it, so we’re entertained and surprised. He takes the typical and makes it very unexpected, outlandish and nonconforming, but above all he knows how to take these situations and make them hilarious.

Psycho Beach Party is a very special show for me, which I know might make your head spin a little. 20 years ago, it was the first ever queer show I was a part of. It introduced me to camp as an artform, and opened the doors to a community that is the bedrock of this theatre. I’m forever grateful to this show, to Charles Busch and to everyone in our community for showing time and time again that just when we think something is “normal,” we prove the opposite to be true. No one is typical, and I’m grateful for that too.

See You Again after “Summer Vacation”.



Paul Conroy (*He/Him/His*)
Founder & Producing Artistic Director
Out Front Theatre Company



OUT FRONT
THEATRE COMPANY
presents

PSYCHO BEACH PARTY

BY

Charles Busch

STARRING

Andi Stanesic, Josh Hudson, Blake Fountain, Hope Clayborne,
Marissa Garcia, Branden Hembree, Emily Nedvidek, Jack Caron,
Tim Colee, Corey J. Finley, Kirstyn Sanders, and TJ Ruth

DIRECTOR

Paul Conroy

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Mahala Dawn

LIGHTING DESIGNER

David Reingold

COSTUME DESIGNER

Jay Reynolds

SCENIC DESIGNER

Alexander Pirtle

SOUND DESIGNER

Brady Brown

WIG DESIGNER

Cathleen O'Neal

CHOREOGRAPHER

Tyler Sarkis

DRAMATURG

Elliott Folds

PROPS DESIGNER

Sydney Lee

INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Laura Hackman

ASST. DIRECTOR

Grace Davenport

ASST. STAGE MANAGER

Charlie Edwards

ASST. DRAMATURG

Macy Cardwell

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.



FULTON COUNTY
arts & culture



REGIONS



MAYOR'S OFFICE OF
Cultural Affairs

This program is supported in part by Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. Georgia Council for the Arts also receives support from its partner agency - the National Endowment for the Arts. This program is supported in part by the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs. Funding for this program is provided by the Fulton County Board of Commissioners.



presents

SETTING: ON AND AROUND A BEACH IN MALIBU.

TIME: 1962

Cast & Creative Team

CAST

ChickletAndi Stanesic
 Star Cat..... Josh Hudson
 Mrs. Forrest.....Blake Fountain
 Berdine..... Hope Clayborne
 Marvel Ann.....Marissa Garcia
 Kanaka.....Brandon Hembree
 Bettina BarnesEmily Nedvidek
 Yo-Yo.....Jack Caron
 Provoloney..... Tim Colee
 Nicky..... Corey J. Finley
 Swings..... Kirstyn Sanders & TJ Ruth

CREATIVE TEAM

Director Paul Conroy
 Production Stage Manager.....Mahala Dawn
 Lighting Designer David Reingold

Costume Designer.....Jay Reynolds
 Scenic DesignerAlexander Pirtle
 Sound DesignerBrady Brown
 Wig Designer Cathleen O’Neal
 Props Designer..... Sydney Lee
 Choreographer Tyler Sarkis
 Dramaturg..... Elliott Folds
 Intimacy Director..... Laura Hackman
 Assistant Director..... Grace Davenport
 Costume Assistant Jillian Forrest
 Assistant Stage ManagerCharlie Edwards
 Assistant DramaturgMacy Cardwell
 Photographer Sydney Lee
 VideographerSaturnblu Productions
 Public Relations..... JMF Communications
 Graphic Designer.....Brandon D Hunt

SPECIAL THANKS Jeff Allen, Michael Etheridge, Brandon Bostian, Gustavo Ruiz Abad, ART Station, Reilly Loeb-Muth and Aaron Linzer

We apologize for anyone who may have been accidentally omitted from this program.

COMMITMENTS & VALUES

MISSION

Out Front Theatre Company's mission is to tell LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intergender, Asexual) stories.

VISION

Out Front Theatre Company's vision is to strengthen the LGBTQIA+ community in Georgia by exploring and celebrating the universal human experience through the lens of gender and sexuality.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION COMMITMENT

The staff and board of Out Front Theatre Company want to put the following metrics in place so that we can track them to completion. We want our stakeholders and our patrons to see real results.

- We want to have representative board members from black and brown communities, as well as gender nonconforming representatives and increase that representation by at least 10% every year until we reach a goal of above 50%.
- We want to produce, support, or promote at least 2 shows/events from creatives of color every year and increase that number by at least 20% every year.
- We want to increase our presence in communities of color and in women's communities through intentional outreach. We can do this by creating a communication strategy to expand our patronage. To that end, we will recruit a community outreach intern or staff member to help achieve this goal.
- We want to increase our intersectional involvement by partnering with other socially progressive nonprofit organizations to collaborate on community events. The goal is to have at least one partner event per year with an ultimate goal of three per year.

Please visit
www.OutFrontTheatre.com
to learn more.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We are gathered on the unceded land of the Mvskoke (Muscogee/Creek) peoples. We ask you to join us in acknowledging the Mvskoke community, their elders both past and present, as well as future generations. Out Front Theatre Company also acknowledges that it was founded upon exclusions and erasures of many Indigenous peoples, including those on whose land this institution is located.

This acknowledgment demonstrates a commitment to beginning the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism.



THE MUSCOGEE NATION

**For more information on this nation,
as well as how to support to them,
please visit www.muscogeenation.com**

CAST & CREW BIOS

CAST

ANDI STANESIC *She/Her* (Chicklet) is thrilled to be back on the Out Front stage! Previous Out Front Theatre credits include: *The Golden Girls: The Lost Episodes - Holiday Edition, warplay, Outprov, Zanna Don't!* Previous Atlanta credits: *The Grown Up* (Out of Box Theatre), *Merrily We Roll Along Concert* (Actor's Express), *One Minute Play Festival* (1MPF). Education includes: Acting internship (Actor's Express), Bachelor's Degree in Theatre (Georgia College and State University). They wish much love to this town, Atlanta, and the many people they love in it. Follow @andistanesic on Instagram for more of Andi!

JOSH HUDSON *He/Him* (Star-Cat) is excited to return to the Out Front stage for *Psycho Beach Party!* Previous Atlanta theatre credits include *Junie B. Jones* (GET), *Kinky Boots* (Out Front), and *Fun Home* (Actor's Express). Other professional theatre credits include the following: *Bonnie and Clyde* (MOMO), *Xanadu* (ECTC), *Pippin* (RTOP), *My Fair Lady* (GLOW Lyric Theatre), and the *Jurassic Quest National Tour*. He hopes you enjoy the show, and hop on in, the water's fine!

BLAKE FOUNTAIN *He/Him* (Mrs. Forrest) is back at Out Front - buckets of snakes couldn't keep him away! Previous Out Front Theatre credits include *Ruthless!*, *SnowGirls - The Musical*, *Christmas Dearest*, *The Golden Girls: The Lost Episodes - Holiday Edition*, *Bright Colors & Bold Patterns*, and *Christmas with the Crawfords*. You may also have seen his slutty alter-ego, Tugboat the Queen, around town, hosting *Drag Reflex*, or at your local Dillard's performing her one-woman show, *Tuggin' On Your Heartstrings*, paid for in part by viewers like you. Previous Atlanta credits include *Everybody's Talking About Jamie* (Actor's Express), *Fiddler on the Roof*;

Mary Poppins (City Springs Theatre Co.), *The Wizard of Oz*; *Guys and Dolls* (Atlanta Lyric), *Bullets Over Broadway*; *Leading Ladies* (Georgia Ensemble Theatre), *Clue: On Stage*; *I Love You Because* (Marietta Theatre Company). Buckets of love to Nana, Sam, Butter, Bean, and my entire Out Front chosen family. Follow him @nonsmokingpartyoftwo and @tugboatthequeen

HOPE CLAYBORNE *She/Her* (Berdine) is excited to be making her Out Front debut (woo hoo)! Her favorite roles include Benvolio in *Romeo and Juliet:60* (Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse), May in *Junie B. Jones the Musical* (Georgia Ensemble Theatre), and Violet in *9 to 5* (Valdosta State Theatre & Dance). She is very grateful for this opportunity and hopes you enjoy the show! You can follow her on Instagram @h0pe.c.:

MARISSA GARCIA (Marvel Ann) is thrilled to be making her Out Front debut in *Psycho Beach Party*. A graduate of Millikin University (BFA Musical Theatre & Dance minor), she is a SAG-AFTRA eligible actor. Recent Credits: Teihutu/Ensemble in *Honeymoon in Vegas* (Marietta Theatre Company), Ginger Brooks in *1940s Radio Hour* (The Strand), Roderigo in *Othello* (Women's Theatre Festival), Siblings/Mama in the virtual reading of *Behheading Columbus* (Occupy the Stage '22); Film: *Jules Untitled Short* (WBF), *Veronica Extreme Obsession I & II*; *New Works: Carol Why Are You Like This?* (Sharai Bohannon & Tom Robson). Marissa is grateful to her parents, family, and friends for their continued support and love, and would like to thank all those involved in Psycho Beach Party for making this one fun ride. Website: mgmarissagarcia.com. Socials: @officialmarissagarcia.

CAST & CREW BIOS (CONTINUED)

BRANDEN HEMBREE *He/Him* (Kanaka) is stoked to be making his Out Front Theatre debut! Recent theatre credits include: *The Wedding Singer* at Players Guild (Robbie Hart), *Xanadu* at Act 3 Productions (Sonny Malone), *It's Only a Play* at Process Theatre (Frank Finger), *Rock of Ages* at OnStage Atlanta (Stacey Jaxx). Branden is one of the guitarists in City Wide Fire and is excited to be recording their debut album. He is grateful for the love and support of his friends and family and wants you to know the translation of his character's name means human being. Surf's Up!

EMILY NEDVIDEK *She/Her* (Bettina Barnes) is thrilled to be returning to the Out Front stage as yet another Old Hollywood Diva! You may have previously seen her as Joan Crawford in *Christmas with the Crawfords* or *Christmas Dearest*, and if you thought that was a wild ride... strap in. Select Atlanta credits include: *MacBeth* and *Legacy of Light* (Synchronicity), *Alabama Story* and *Bullets Over Broadway* (Georgia Ensemble Theatre), and *The Wizard of Oz* (Atlanta Lyric). Thanks to Mark and her family for their never ending love, the cast for their chaotic creativity, and Paul for keeping her employed!

JACK CARON *He/Him* (Yo-Yo) is so excited to be hitting the Out Front stage! Out Front Theatre: Debut. Previous Atlanta acting credits have included: Blumhouse/Peacock TV's film *They/Them*, Amazon's upcoming comedy *You're Cordially Invited*, and Paramount Plus's *Jerry and Marge Go Large*. Past theater credits include: *Sense and Sensibility*, *Rocky Horror*, and *The Party*. He is a performing arts graduate of the SCAD School of Film and Acting. His favorite words to use are PERIOD and C*NT :) Follow him @jackcaron on Instagram

TIM COLEE *He/Him* (Provoloney) is excited to be making his Out Front Theatre debut. Previous Atlanta theatre credits include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as Lysander, *Snug and Moth* (Atlanta Shakespeare Company), *Romeo and Juliet 60* as Romeo (Atlanta Shakespeare Company), *MacBeth 60* as MacDuff and *Ross* (Atlanta Shakespeare Company), *As You Like It* as Oliver (Atlanta Shakespeare Company), *Dear John* as Coroner Ragland (Tre Floyd Productions) and *A Raisin in the Sun* as Karl Lindner (Vision Theatre Company). Tim would like to thank his parents, Fiancé Lindsey and fur baby Lady for all their love and support. Follow him @timcolee on Instagram.

COREY J. FINLEY *He/Him* (Nicky) is grateful to be making his Out Front Theatre Company Debut! You may have seen him in Tennessee at the Roxy Regional Theatre as Love in *Thoughts of a Colored Man*, or around Atlanta at Authenticity Theatre as Male Ensemble in *How I Learned to Drive*, at Onstage Theatre as Gabriel in *Fences*, at Woodstock Arts as Golden Thunder in *AIRNESS*, or at Actor's Express as an Acting Apprentice during their 2021-2022 Season. Corey is Mississippi born, Nashville raised and hails from the college Austin Peay State University. He moved to Atlanta to continue his passion for Theatre and plans to move forward into Film and Television. He would love to thank everyone for their support. Follow him on Instagram @coreyjinley

KIRSTYN SANDERS *She/Her* (Swing) is totally flipping put about her debut at Out Front Theatre. She has been performing for the past two years with the American Immersion Theatre's Murder Mystery Co. Most recent credits include *The Little Mermaid* at Camp Atlanta, stilt walking and performing at Stone Mountain Park for the 2023 season. She also works in film and tv productions in the Atlanta

CAST & CREW BIOS (CONTINUED)

area. Thank you to everyone for coming out to the show and supporting LGBTQIA+ theatre. Follow her on Instagram @Kirstynvsanders

TJ RUTH *He/Him* (Swing) is thrilled to be back on the Out Front stage! Previous Out Front Theatre credits include: *Kinky Boots*, *Boys in the Buff*, and *The Golden Girls: The Lost Episodes - Holiday Edition*. Much love to my parents, family, and friends for all of their support!

CREATIVE TEAM

PAUL CONROY *He/Him* (Director) is the Founder and Producing Artistic Director of Out Front Theatre Company, Georgia's LGBTQIA+ focused theatre company. Originally from the Boston area, he holds a BA in English/Writing with a Minor in Theatre from Long Island University in addition to both a MA in Directing from Roosevelt University and a MFA in Directing from the University of Idaho, and as a playwright his original musical, *The Ethel Merman Disco Christmas Spectacular!* (which he also directed) premiered at Out Front Theatre Company in December of 2018. Other select directing credits at Out Front include *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert: The Musical*, *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *Xanadu*, *Kinky Boots*, *Ruthless!* and most recently *SnowGirls - The Musical*. Paul has taught courses in Theatre at Georgia State University, sits on OUT Georgia's Board of Directors as Nonprofit Liaison and recently concluded his six-year term as a founding member of the City of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ Advisory Board for which he chaired the Arts, Culture and Entertainment subcommittee. He was named one of Georgia's 100 Most Influential LGBTQ+ people in 2020 and has been featured in The New York Times, The Times of London and numerous other media outlets speaking about the importance of

queer centered arts. Paul is the co-founder of both the Queer Theatre Alliance, an international coalition of LGBTQ+ centered theatre companies and AQuAA, the Atlanta Queer Arts Alliance, which focuses on enhancing Atlanta's vibrant and vital LGBTQ+ focused arts organizations.

MAHALA DAWN *She/Her* (Production Stage Manager) Out Front Theatre: *SnowGirls - The Musical*. Other Atlanta Credits: *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *A Prayer for the French Republic*, *Urinetown*, *Sunset Baby*, *Heathers*, *Crossroads*, *Fun Home*, *Downstairs*, *Skintight* (Actor's Express). *Cassie's Ballad* (Found Stages).

DAVID REINGOLD *He/Him* (Lighting Designer) is psyched to be returning to Out Front for his ninth production. Previously at Out Front: *At the Wake of a Dead Drag Queen*, *The Prom*, *Ruthless!*, and *Kinky Boots* among others. Recently around Atlanta: *Mercury* (Actor's Express), *Rooted*, *Support Group for Men* (Horizon Theatre), *Women in Jeopardy* (Georgia Ensemble Theatre), *Breathe, This Silly Little Game* (Atlanta Contemporary Dance Company). "Many thanks to Paul and Sydney for continuing to welcome me at this wonderful company, to all the Out Front staff for keeping the ship afloat, and to you the audience for helping to keep the lights on." davidreingold.net

JAY REYNOLDS *He/Him* (Costume Designer) is thrilled to be designing at Out Front Theatre for *Psycho Beach Party*. Past favorite Out Front Theatre credits for Costume Design include: *The Prom*, *Kinky Boots*, *Ruthless!*, *When Last We Flew*, *All The Natalie Portmans*, *Xanadu*, *La Cage aux Folles*, *The Ethel Merman Christmas Disco Spectacular!*, *The View Upstairs*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Sordid Lives*, *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert: The Musical*, and *The Most Fabulous Story Ever*

CAST & CREW BIOS (CONTINUED)

Told. He has designed for Actor's Express, The Atlanta Lyric Theatre, The Aurora Theatre and OnStage Atlanta. Reynolds has also designed and constructed costumes for major films, television and concerts. He would like to lovingly thank his husband Michael for loaning him to the theatre.
www.houseofwu.com panoply

ALEXANDER PIRTLE *He/Him* (Scenic Designer): Normally supporting Out Front as an invaluable audience member, this is Alex's first time making it in the program! He is pleased to be making a debut providing set design for *Psycho Beach Party*. Alex has a background in Animation, Photography, and other disciplines of visual arts; it's about time he got his hands dirty and painted a set! As much as this is his premier, this is concurrently his swan song. He and his partner Nick are moving to San Francisco after the sun sets on the beach. We will wish them all the best!

BRADY BROWN *He/Him* (Sound Designer) is grooved beyond repair to be working on *Psycho Beach Party*. He is the creator and director of *Judy's 100th Birthday Celebration Cabaret* at Out Front Theatre Company and *Hologays* as a part of 7 Stages' Curious Holiday Encounters. Previous sound design credits include: *The Prom*, *Ruthless!* (Broadway World Atlanta Award for Best Sound Design), *I Wanna F***ing Tear You Apart*, *Christmas Dearest*, *Homos, or Everyone in America* (Out Front Theatre), and *Sweat* (Atlanta City Theatre). He also serves as the Director of Marketing & Communications on staff at Out Front. Thanks to Mom for all the support. Ride the wave, bro! "Give the people what they want and then go have a hamburger." – Judy Garland

CATHLEEN O'NEAL *She/Her* (Wig Designer) is thrilled to be returning to Out Front Theatre Company: Previous Atlanta credits include,

Wig Designer for Out Front's *SnowGirls - The Musical*, Costume Designer for *Abigail, 1702* (Aurora Theatre), Stitcher for *Mamma Mia* (Aurora Theatre), Stitcher for *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Aurora Theatre), Costume Designer for *A Midsummer Nights Dream* (Holy Innocence Episcopal School), Costume Designer for *The Wizard of Oz* (HIES), Costume Designer for *Frozen Jr.* (HIES), Costume Designer for *Alice Through the Looking Glass* (HIES), Costume Designer for *Head Over Heels* (Georgia College and State University), Hair and Makeup Designer for *The Revolutionist* (GCSU), Hair and Makeup Designer for *Heathers* (GCSU). Cathleen works full time at Georgia College and State University as the Costume Shop Supervisor. Follow her on Instagram @cathleeneonealcostumedesign.

TYLER SARKIS *He/Him* (Choreographer) is always grateful to be "home" creating and playing with these talented Artists -- thank you for supporting local & Queer Art. Out Front credits: *Ruthless!*, *Xanadu*, *Christmas Dearest*, *Homos or Everyone in America*, *Xanadu*. "Whatever you think you can do or believe you can do, begin it. Action has magic, grace, and power." - Goethe
[@yas_tyler](https://www.instagram.com/yas_tyler) | [tylersarkis.com](https://www.tylersarkis.com)

ELLIOTT FOLDS *He/Him* (Dramaturg) is always so happy to be working with Out Front Theatre Company! Previous Out Front Theatre dramaturgy credits include *The Prom*, *Ruthless!*, *All the Natalie Portmans*, and *Xanadu*. Previous Atlanta dramaturgy credits include: *The Niceties* (Stage Door Theatre), *Sweat* (Woodstock Arts), *Mac/Beth* (Synchronicity Theatre), *Maybe Happy Ending* (Alliance Theatre), and *53% Of* (Alliance Theatre). As an actor, he has worked at Out Front Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre, Synchronicity Theatre, and Stage Door Theatre. Deeply grateful to the Psycho Beach

CAST & CREW BIOS (CONTINUED)

Party team, especially Paul (always) and Macy (a damn good dramaturg). Buckets of love always to Caty.

LAURA HACKMAN *She/Her* (Intimacy Director) is thrilled to be back at Out Front where she previously intimacy directed *The Prom*. Locally, Laura has also intimacy directed at The Alliance Theatre, Actor's Express, Woodstock Arts, Oglethorpe University, and Georgia State University. In NYC, Laura serves as the Resident Intimacy Consultant for Mercury Store. Laura is also a theatre director with more than 70 productions to her name and an arts educator, currently teaching in the School of Film, Media and Theatre at Georgia State University. She holds an MFA in Directing from The Catholic University of America.

GRACE DAVENPORT (Assistant Director) is so excited to be back at Out Front AD'ing her second run of *Psycho Beach Party!* Previous Out Front Theatre credits include: Malvolio in *Bad Romance* and Assistant Director for *Ruthless!* and *SnowGirls - The Musical*. Previous Atlanta credits include: Chicklet (u/s) in *Psycho Beach Party* and Trebonius in *Julius Caesar* (Atlanta City Theatre). Assistant Stage Manager for *Red Speedo* (Actor's Express). Previous Regional credits include: Janet Van De Graff in *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Linda Miller Theatre), Wednesday Addams in *The Addams Family* (Linda Miller Theatre), and Denise in *A Sander's Family Christmas* (Gilmer Arts). She would like to thank her friends, family, and partner for supporting her mission to create safe spaces for everyone to entertain. IG: gmellofly_

CHARLIE EDWARDS *She/Her* (Assistant Stage Manager) is delighted to be working with Out Front Theatre for the second time! Her first Out Front production was *The Prom*. She is a junior at Georgia State University where she is studying theatre. During her time at GSU she has worked as an intern to the technical director of Dahlberg Theatre and been involved in shows such as *Everybody* and *Circadian*. She is Vice President of Atlanta City Theatre Players and continues to look for more opportunities to celebrate the stage. You can find her @charrenee04 on Instagram.

MACY CARDWELL *She/Her* (Assistant Dramaturg) is a junior at Kennesaw State University majoring in Theatre & Performance Studies. Out Front Theatre: Debut. Previous Atlanta credits: Assistant Dramaturg for *Jesus Hopped the A Train* (Actors Express) and Ensemble in *The Light in the Piazza* (The Jennie T. Anderson Theatre). Educational credits: Lead Dramaturg for *Reefer Madness* and *Company*; Asst. Dramaturg for *Mother Road*, *Genesis Redux*, *Jitney*, and *Rent* at Kennesaw State University. Soli deo gloria.





QUEER NIVAL!

FOODTRUCKS
GAMES VENDORS
AND MORE!

**Kick-off Pride Month at the
fabulous Queernival!**

Join us for drinks, games, food trucks, performances, and more for a celebration of the LGBTQIA+ community at this one-of-a-kind extravaganza! Bring your friends and family for the perfect event to start the summer season.

JUNE 2, 2024

1 PM - 7 PM

Out Front Theatre Company
999 Brady Avenue, Atlanta

www.OutFrontTheatre.com

Charles Busch, the Importance of Escapism, and the “Fathomless Possibilities of the Human Comedy”

In the 1978 *New York Times* review of Charles Busch’s breakout comedy *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom*, one critic wrote that the play boasted “costumes flashier than pinball machines, outrageous lines, awful puns, sinister innocence, and harmless depravity.” Over the last forty years, these qualities have all become hallmarks of Busch’s work as he’s ensured his place as a prolific and singular voice in American queer theatre. From his pulpy underground shows like *Theodora, She-Bitch of Byzantium* (1984) and up to the Tony Award-nominated comedy *The Tale of the Allergist’s Wife* (2000), Busch’s plays have thrilled audiences with their gaudy spectacle, lowbrow puns, highbrow references, and contained chaos.



An early childhood tragedy saw Busch moving to Manhattan to live with his aunt, where he withdrew into the world of old movies – an obsession that continues to influence every corner of his body of work. While at Northwestern University, he wrote and starred in his first drag piece. As he wrote in his memoir, Busch saw drag less “an expression of outrage” and more “a passageway to channel the feminine in my nature, which turned out to be a place of authority.” His embrace of camp – of artifice and exaggeration, as Susan Sontag put it – became central to his plays as well.

It also made Busch a central figure in Theatre of the Ridiculous, a movement that combined queer performance aesthetics with experimental theatre. From its emergence in gritty, off-off-Broadway spaces in the mid-1960s, Theatre of the Ridiculous surpassed the bounds of absurdism in its aim to skewer realism in theatre and heteronormative society at large. Escapism was always a core tenet to Theatre of the Ridiculous, but as scholar Sean F. Edgecomb argues, by the time Busch entered the scene amidst the HIV/AIDS crisis, escapism “became a self-protective mode for collective agency.”



Understanding this context is key to understanding *Psycho Beach Party*, which premiered in 1987. Director Paul Conroy has repeatedly emphasized the importance of escapism, and while *Psycho Beach Party* may not appear to be tackling “serious” subject matter, it still fundamentally exists as a piece of queer resistance. As Edgecomb stresses, Busch’s work may not have been written to “criticize the social injustices of Reagan-era America,” but it still provided “a few hours of fun and entertainment for an audience whose lives revolved around a melancholic uncertainty.” Silliness is serious business.

Times change, however, and *Psycho Beach Party* has changed with it. Busch has given the play some rewrites specifically for Out Front Theatre Company - a far cry from its late-night premiere in 1987, where Busch himself played the lead role of Chicklet. Something like *Psycho Beach Party* - that was written for a very specific audience, venue, and context - might not always stand up to contemporary critical scrutiny, but this isn’t necessarily a bad thing. Theatre is a living art form, and plays are constantly being reinterpreted by different artists and audiences. The play may not resonate with its original context, but it can still meet this new one and provide a few hours of entertainment for an audience in need of a good time.

– Elliott Folds, Dramaturg

Dramaturgy

Here are the girls! Here are the boys! Here are the songs! And young romantic joys!" These words appear in pastel on the first frames of the trailer for *Beach Party*, the 1963 film that is credited with spawning the "***Beach Party***" film genre of the 1960s. In a way, these words sum up the core appeals of the genre: teenagers, music, and romance, packaged in pastel colors and California sunshine.

Beach Party (1963) was produced by American International Pictures (AIP) and starred Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello, who would appear in seven more films in the genre. AIP ultimately created 11 beach party films, and every other major studio of the 1960s made at least one, though most were not as successful as AIP. These movies were pure escapism in the midst of a tumultuous time in U.S. history. Topics such as the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the sexual revolution were blithely absent from these films. Instead they abound with surfing, dancing, and skimpy bathing suits.

Psycho Beach Party begins with this atmosphere, utilizing many elements of the beach party formula, and then adds in plot points and imagery from Alfred Hitchcock's psychological thrillers—most notably *Spellbound* (1945) and *Marnie* (1964). Hitchcock was a famous English film director, known as the "Master of Suspense" for his ability to maximize an audience's fear and anxiety. Both *Spellbound* and *Marnie* portray a protagonist with a psychological disorder which can be triggered by seemingly unremarkable things, like parallel lines, or the color red.

By the time ***Psycho Beach Party*** premiered at the Limbo Lounge in 1986, the beach party era and Hitchcock thrillers were objects of nostalgia, but the play also took inspiration from a more contemporary influence—teen slasher movies. Slashers had their "golden age" from 1978 to 1984, spurred on by the success of *Halloween* (1978) and marked by hits like ***Friday the 13th*** (1980) and ***A Nightmare on Elm Street*** (1984). While this play may not include any actual murders, one can't deny there is something Kruegeresque in the hovering dread that haunts these innocent teens in the form of a mysterious shaver.

Psycho Beach Party may not be very subtle about borrowing from these suspenseful films, but you'll probably find that it avoids the dark and serious tone associated with Hitchcock's thrillers, or the right-behind-you terror brought on by the slashers. Instead it leans into the silliness and escapism that come with teenagers goofing around on a beach and ultimately finding solutions to all of their problems. Indeed, ***Psycho Beach Party*** is not to be taken too seriously. Instead, I encourage you to lean into the fun and hilarity of it all—that's what parties are for.

– Macy Cardwell, Assistant Dramaturg

Award-Winning Design

Done in-house and *on-budget*.

Brandon D Hunt

Materializing ideas through design.

PRINT • DIGITAL • ILLUSTRATION • BRANDING

brandondhunt.com

(888) 239-5551



CONNECT WITH US!
#OutFrontPsychoBeach

Facebook: Out Front Theatre Company

Threads: @outfronttheatre

Instagram: @outfronttheatre

Snapchat: outfronttheatre

Venmo: @outfronttheatre



WHO WE ARE

Out Front Theatre Company was established to tell stories of the LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intergender, Asexual) experience and community, giving voice to LGBTQIA+ authors, composers, artists, and creators through the medium of theatre and the performing arts. Out Front plans to develop new works and produce classic pieces of theatre that have communicated these stories of the LGBTQIA+ population to a wider audience over time.

As a non-profit organization with a dedicated focus to better the LGBTQIA+ population, we strive to:

- **Produce** established works and premiere productions created by members of the LGBTQIA+ society,
- **Generate** productions with universal themes which are important to the LGBTQIA+ community,
- **Educate** the populous to LGBTQIA+ history,
- **Work** with local and national LGBTQIA+ organizations to bring awareness of issues facing the LGBTQIA+ to the greater Atlanta area,
- **Create** artistic and educational opportunities for at-risk LGBTQIA+ youths by collaborating with local educational institutions and organizations,
- **Expand** the number of theatrical opportunities for artists who are members of or who support the LGBTQIA+ community.

Out Front hopes to create a narrative that will reach beyond the stage, into the

conversations and minds our audiences and artists. Theatre's power as a catalyst to spur dialogues goes back thousands of years. Out Front lives to continue that grand tradition of bringing the stories of the LGBTQIA+ people into the spotlight.

LGBTQIA+ Definitions

L stands for Lesbian: Term used to describe female identified people attracted romantically, erotically, and/or emotionally to other female identified people.

G stands for Gay: Term used in some cultural settings to represent male identified people who are attracted to other male identified people in a romantic, erotic and/or emotional sense. Also, a term used to refer to the LGBTQIA+ community as a whole or as an individual identity label for anyone who does not identify as heterosexual.

B stands for Bisexual: A person emotionally, physically, and/or sexually attracted to people of more than one sex and/or gender. This attraction does not have to be equally split between genders and there may be a preference for one gender over others.

T stands for Transgender: A person who lives as a member of a gender other than that expected based on anatomical sex. Sexual orientation varies and is not dependent on gender identity. This term is sometimes used to refer to the gender variant community as a whole.

Q stands for Queer: An umbrella term, which embraces a matrix of sexual preferences, orientations, and habits of the not-exclusively-heterosexual-and-monogamous majority. Queer includes lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transpeople, intersex persons, and many other sexually transgressive explorers. The term is sometimes used as a sexual orientation label instead of 'bisexual' as a way of acknowledging that there are more than two genders to be attracted to, or as a way of stating a non-heterosexual orientation without having to state who they are attracted to.

I stands for Intergender: Intergender people have a gender identity that is in the middle between the binary genders of female and male, and may be a mix of both.

A stands for Asexual: A term describing individuals who do not experience sexual attraction or do not have interest in or desire for sex. Asexuality is different from celibacy, which means abstaining from sex. Asexuality is often viewed as a spectrum – meaning there are varying levels and identities regarding someone's emotional, spiritual and romantic attraction. The best way to refer to the asexual community is to use the umbrella term "ace" or "aces" as in the "ace community," which acknowledges that spectrum.

+ stands for Many Other Identifications including, but not limited to pansexual, genderqueer, polysexual, agender, androsexual, demisexual, and skoliosexual. We strive to be as inclusive as we can and know we can always improve.

Please visit outfronttheatre.com for a more expansive list of identities, sexualities, terms, resources and more

We welcome all humans, regardless of labels, and hope we celebrate and accept everyone regardless of how they identify.



STAFF AND BOARD LIST

Out Front Theatre Company Staff

Paul Conroy (*He/Him*) -
Founder & Producing Artistic Director

Precious West-Allen (*She/Her*) -
General Manager

Justin Kalin (*He/Him*) -
Associate Artistic Director

Brady Brown (*He/Him*) - Director
of Marketing & Communications

Robby Myles (*He/Him*) -
Box Office Manager

Sydney Lee (*She/Her*) -
Production Manager

Madison Grant (*She/Her*) -
Facilities Manager

Anna Dvorak (*She/Her*) -
Special Events Coordinator

Board of Directors & Officers

Clint Clark-Duke (*He/Him*) - Chairperson

Blake Fountain (*He/Him*)
- Vice Chairperson

Jay Reynolds (*He/Him*) - Treasurer

Kelly Tonina Cooper (*She/Her*)
- Secretary

Brad Bernstein (*He/Him*)

Jason Feldman (*He/Him*)

Steven Igarashi-Ball (*He/Him*)

Donation Listing

Donations made between July 1, 2023 - April 23, 2024.

Out Front Theatre Company is a 501c3 non-profit organization. The health of the company depends on support from patrons just like you! All donations are 100% tax deductible and greatly appreciated! No gift is too small because it truly takes a community to make the arts thrive and grow.

We wouldn't be here without the support of the friends listed below and we would LOVE to add your name to our list of supporters! Donation information is available at the box office or at outfronttheatre.com.

THANK YOU FOR BEING A friend



DOROTHY (\$5,000+)

Anonymous (2)
Dr. Hal Brody
& Mr. Donald Smith

Tony Conway
Rob Dean and Rob Epstein
Jay Reynolds and Michael Barnett



ROSE (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Jackson Autry
Steve Hagen
Josh Pitre

Stonewall Sports Inc.



BLANCHE (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Anonymous (3)
Jeffrey Allen
Corregan Brown

Terry Chongulia
Adam Fellabaum
Jody & Michael Feldman
Warren Gump
Becky McInturff
Tom Sands
Joe Sequeria
Mary Anne Walser



SOPHIA (\$500 - \$999)

Anonymous
John Bowden
Lisa Boyd

Craig Hardesty
Whitney Johnson
Ken Skalitzky
George Sudberry
Alison Weidner



MILES (\$100 - \$499)

Anonymous (2)
Austin Alexander
Dennis Barrett
David Bearse

Boyd Beckwith
Bojan Beganovic
John Bowden
Cynthia Cline
Leslyn Cooper Parks
Dennis Dean
Scott Evers and Al Besse
Thomas Fish
James Fortier
Bruce Garner
Edward Gaulrapp
Elyse Haber Freedman
Rusty Haber
Travis Hampton
William Hansen
Brandon Hunt
Steven Igarashi-Ball
Grant Knox and Brian Smith

THANK YOU FOR BEING A *friend*

Michael Marolla
Elizabeth Medin
Melissa Miller
Jamal Mohammad
Sean O'Keefe
Jeffrey Rakofsky
Harrison & Ava Reeves
Ryan Rodriguez
Richard Shivers
Ken Skalitzky
Katie Smith
Robin Swett Newberg
Jonathan Throop
Richard Vitaris
Evan Walker
Robert Wayne
Emily William Jordan
Paris William
Barbara Woodlon
Taylor Ybarra
Howed Yorek
James McKinney
Steven Berman

Michael Caster
Melanie Clark
John Clark-Duke
Will Cole
Andrew Cuomo
Thomas Dapogny
Grace Davenport
Maryrose DeGroot
Cynthia DeVille & Andrea Baker
Joe and Jeff Donovan
Paige Drye
Amanda Ellenburg
Ian Evatt
James Faust
Louis Fuerstman
Lous Fuestman
Patrick Garver
Lindsay Gawron
Corinne Graffunder
Jodi Greenwald
Edith Guyton
Rusty Haber
Mark Hamlin
Jesse Hancock
Amanda Harris
Natalie Hazen
Joshua Hecht
Charles Hiromoto
Matt Hoffman
Cathy Holbrook
Sarah Holliday
Daniel Hollifield
David Holmes and John Rowell
Mitchell Ivers
Alyssa James
Alyssa James
Quintara Johnson
Tanya Johnson
Brad Kasier
Carrie Kendrick
Njai Kenon
Caroline King
Amy King
Elizabeth Kirkhope
Austin Kunis
Glen L. Frankel
Brandon Laws
Dominic Lawson
Wendy Layne
Elaine Lee
Dustin Lewis
Ivette Lopez

Joshua Lorenz
Femmaeve MacQueen
John Maddox
Michael Marolla
Jill Martin
Emily Maynard
Deanna McCoy
Amber McDermott
Wendy Melkonian
Jamal Mohammad
Justin Moua
Terence Ng
Joseph Normandin
Leonard Pallats
Kyle Patterson
Andrew Pereira
Megan Poole
Tamara Powell
Joy Purcell
Brian Purchner
Lawrence Rathburn
Andrea Rattray
Aysha Razavi
Doyle Reynolds
Timothy Reynolds
Mark and Jill Rosenberg
David Rossetti
Cortland Russell
Ian Sawan
William Seright
David Silverstein
Matthew Smith
Caroline Stead
John Stegall
Nicole Stein
Aubrie T. Goodson
Duncan Teague
Celenia Toledo
James Triplett
Juan Unzueta
Wayne van Halem
Alberto Vargas
Marietta Walsh
Clark Weisner
Stephen Wells
David Welniak and Scott Sykes
Kyle Greene West
Keli Whitnell
Madison Wickline
Tara Winston
Shannon Yasser
Janelle Zabresky



STAN (\$1 - \$99)

Anonymous
(89)
Maria Adams

Samuel Alexander
Jeremy Allan
Robert Allen
Leah Anderson
Aaron Andrew Harris
Jason Arnold
Kimberly Asher
Mandy Ayers
Susan Baker and Nancy Strauch
Denise Barrett
Dennis Barrett
Dave Bearse and Clinton Patters
Ryan Bee
Jana Benhardt
George Bergmark
Robert Borders
Majorie Breiding
Steven Brewer
Mitch Brown
Candace Brown
William Byrne
Christine Carroll



The Golden Gals *Live!*

June 6-16

www.OutFrontTheatre.com



BOY NEXT DOOR
MENSWEAR / ATLANTA

SUMMER
STARTS
HERE,
DOUBLE
THE FUN

BOYNEXTDOORMENSWEAR.COM

1000 PIEDMONT AVE STE A, ATLANTA, GA 30309 - 404.873.2664

zeros®



VOICES OF NOTE

presents



ATLANTA
WOMEN'S
CHORUS

PHOENIX RISING

Tickets and more at:
voicesofnote.org



JUNE 1 @ 2PM & 7PM

THE LAWRENCEVILLE ARTS CENTER, HOME OF AURORA THEATER

TICKETS: \$30 | \$20.00 FOR STUDENTS/SENIORS/VETERANS, KIDS UNDER 12 FREE

DR. MELISSA ARASI, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

ENGEL&VÖLKERS®



Unlock Your Real Estate Dreams with a Purpose: Supporting Out Front Theatre Together

Join me in supporting Out Front Theatre as we work together to fulfill your real estate aspirations! I'm committed to donating **20% of my commission** to Out Front Theatre in your name. Simply let me know you were referred by them. Feel free to reach out to me via call, text, or email any time.



Adam Parker | Your Local REALTOR®
1745 Peachtree Street, Suite T | Atlanta | GA 30309
M 404-849-9829 | O 404-845-7724
adam@evatlanta.com | adamparker.com

Keeping the Focus on You



Whether your goals include retirement, education or a major purchase – such as a second home – we always begin with what’s most important to *you*.

Let's Talk



678.871.2222

www.ElementWealthAdvisors.com



SHOP OUR ONLINE STORE!



Get all your Out Front merch
only at OutFrontTheatre.com/shop

- ✓ TShirts
- ✓ Hoodies
- ✓ Crop Tops
- ✓ Leggings
- ✓ And more!

