Music by Richard Rodgers

Book & Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein

Directed by Robert Chapel

Culbreth Theatre

8 p.m.

November 20–22

and December 3–5, 2008

Matinee November 22, 2008 at 2 p.m.

Special Thanks to Harvey Fleshman
Rodgers & Hammerstein's
OKLAHOMA!

Music by Richard Rodgers
Book and Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

Based on the play “Green Grow The Lilacs” by Lynn Riggs

Original Dances by Agnes de Mille

Directed by Robert Chapel
Musical Direction by Bradley Bloom
Vocal Direction by Alice Layman
Choreography by Monica Talley
Scenic Design by Tom Bloom
Costume Design by Caroline Varney and Christina Leinicke
Lighting Design by Carin Edwards-Orr
Sound Design by Mike Benonis
Technical Direction by Steven L. Warner
Fight Direction by Marianne Kubik
Production Stage Management by Julia Debo

OKLAHOMA! is presented through special arrangement with R&H Theatricals: www.rnhtheatricals.com

DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA GUEST ARTIST
GESEL MASON
January 14-17, 2009

Through support from the U.Va. Provost’s Arts Enhancement Fund and the National Dance Project of the New England Foundation for the Arts, the Department of Drama and the Dance Program will welcome dancer, choreographer and educator- Gesel Mason for a guest artist residency on January 14-17. During her visit, Mason will conduct master classes and group discussions culminating in a public performance of her solo work, No Boundaries: Dancing the Vision of Contemporary Black Choreographers, at 8 p.m. in the Culbreth Theatre on Jan 17.

Ticket Sales Begin Jan 15.
WHO’S WHO IN OKLAHOMA!

Mike Benonis (4th Year Electrical Engineering): Songs for a New World, Hair (Asst. Designer; Engineer), Luminosity (Designer) (U.Va. Drama); The Receipt (Supervising Sound Editor)

Leah Noelle Bernick (4th Year Drama/English): Hair (U.Va. Drama); The Light in the Piazza (Heritage); The Last Five Years (Spectrum); Carmen (Opera Viva)

Richard Block (3rd Year Drama/Music): Henry IV, The Lion in Winter (Sol); Die Fledermaus, Xeres (Opera Viva)

Bradley Bloom (Music Direction, Conductor): City of Angels, Sweeney Todd, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum (Heritage)

Tom Bloom (Chair, Associate Professor, Scenic Design)

Daniel Cackley (3rd Year Drama): Some Girl(s), Twelfth Night (U.Va. Drama); The Homicide Report (U.Va. Lab Series); Cabaret, Once Upon a Mattress (FYP)

Suzanne Emory Casey (4th Year English/Drama major, Dance minor) Hair (U.Va. Drama); Fiddler on the Roof, Pippin (FYP)

Robert Chapel (Professor, Producing Artistic Director, Heritage Theatre Festival)

Kathryn Connors (4th Year Drama major, Dance minor) Some Girl(s), The Voysey Inheritance, Oedipus Tyrannus, Scapin (U.Va. Drama); Fiddler on the Roof (FYP)

Julia Debo (4th Year Drama major, Media Studies minor): Ubu Roi, Good ‘N Bad Things (U.Va. Drama)

Rachel Dorsey (2nd Year Drama/Pre-Commerce): Damn Yankees, Thoroughly Modern Millie (FYP)

Carin L. Edwards-Orr (MFA Alumna ’05): For Colored Girls..., Luminosity, The Cherry Orchard (U.Va. Drama); South Pacific, Enchanted April (Heritage); Mother Courage, Urinetown (Live Arts)

Kate Feldman (2nd Year Politics): Fall 2007 Experimental Dance Concert (U.Va. Drama); The Pointe of It All, RBE in Motion (Rhapsody Ballet Ensemble)

Harrison Gibbons (4th Year Drama): The Voysey Inheritance, Twelfth Night (U.Va. Drama); Around the World in 80 Days (Berkshire Theatre Festival)

Claire Hart (2nd Year Drama/History): Damn Yankees, Thoroughly Modern Millie (FYP)

Russ Hicks (3rd Year Drama/English-Poetry Writing): Hair, Strands in Motion: Fall Dance Concert, Twelfth Night, A...My Name... (U.Va. Drama)

Emily Hobgood (4th Year Drama/Religious Studies): Fiddler on the Roof, Pippin (FYP)

Lee Kelly (4th Year Drama/History, Spanish Minor): Iphigenia and Other Daughters (U.Va. Drama); The Fantasticks (Spectrum); Fiddler on the Roof, Pippin (FYP)

Jason Kobielsus (4th Year Drama): The Voysey Inheritance, Twelfth Night, Ubu Roi, Hair, Cloud 9 (U.Va. Drama); Unto These Hills (Cherokee Hist. Association)

Garrett Kolanda (2nd Year Chemical Engineering): Damn Yankees (FYP)

Marianne Kubik (Assistant Professor, Head of Movement)

Christina Leinicke (1st Year Costume MFA): Illinois Shakespeare Festival; One Flea Spare (ISDT); B.S. Illinois State University

Matthew Marcus (4th Year Drama/Media Studies): Twelfth Night, Ubu Roi, Oedipus, Scapin (U.Va. Drama); Lysistrata (Live Arts); Shakespeare’s Réf (Earl Hamner)

Madeleine Marshall-Roth: Peabody School, 7th Grade, Theater Arts Program, Interlochen Center for the Arts

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Curly ............................................................. Michael Shenefelt
Laurey ............................................................ Emily Hobgood
Will Parker ..................................................... Adam Smith
Adele ................................................................. Caroline Ryon
Aunt Elmer .................................................... Richard Block
Ali Hakim ...................................................... Sam Rabinovitz
Andrew Carnes ............................................ Harrison Gibbons
Cord Elam ..................................................... Jason Kobielsus
Gertie Cummings .......................................... Katie Wall
Sylvie ................................................................. Kurt Rogers

DREAM BALLET

Dream Ballet Curly ........................................... John Rogers
Dream Ballet Laurey ........................................ Linnea White
Dream Ballet Other Women ................................. Lee Kelly

Men ........................................................................ Daniel Cackley

Dream Ballet Other Women................................. Lee Kelly

Kathryn Connors
Kate Feldman
Claire Hart
Amy Strayer
Monica Talley

Men ........................................................................ Daniel Cackley

Matthew Marcus
Russ Hicks
Scott Russell
**MUSICAL NUMBERS**

**ACT I**

Overture .................................................................Orchestra
Oh, What A Beautiful Mornin' .................................Curly
The Surrey With The Fringe on Top .................Curly, Laurey, Aunt Eller
Kansas City .................................................................Will, Aunt Eller, and the Boys
I Cain't Say No! .........................................................Ado Annie
Many A New Day ....................................................Laurey and the Girls
It's A Scandal! It's A Outrage! ............................Ali Hakim, Boys, Girls
People Will Say We're In Love ..............................Curly and Laurey
Poor Jud Is Daid .........................................................Judy
Lonely Room .............................................................Jud
Out Of My Dreams ................................................ Laurey and the Girls
Dream Ballet ...............................Dream Ballet Curly, Dream Ballet Laurey, Jud, Women, Men

15 minute intermission

**ACT II**

The Farmer and The Cowman.........................Aunt Eller, Carnes, Curly, Will,
Ado Annie, and Ensemble
All Er Nuthin’ ...........................................Will, Ado Annie, Sylvie, and Ellen
People Will Say We’re In Love (Reprise) ................Curly and Laurey
Oklahoma .........................................................Curly, Laurey, Aunt Eller, Ike, Fred, and Ensemble
Finale Ultimo ..............................................................Entire Company

**ORCHESTRA**

Violin I ..............................................................Hank Schutz, Elizabeth Wilson
Violin II ............................................................Hannah Wagner, Kyle Ringenberg
Viola .................................................................Gail Moruza, Charlotte Erb
Cello .................................................................Ethan Wagner
Bass ........................................................................Robert Bowen
Guitar ..............................................................James Polson
Flute .................................................................Christine Willard, Anna Russell
Oboe .....................................................................Julia Perry
Clarinet I ..........................................................Karen Pearce
Clarinet II ..........................................................Stephen Millard
Bassoon ............................................................Ann Walton
Horn I .................................................................Clara Mincer
Horn II .................................................................Nancy Lowry
Trombone ......................................................Scott Colley
Trumpet I ..........................................................Alex Bender
Trumpet II ......................................................David Mersiovsky
Percussion ..........................................................Brian Smith
Synthesizer ............................................................J.R. Ankney
Rehearsal Accompanist ...................................Alice Layman
Substitute Rehearsal Accompanist .....................Karen Dalton

Conductor .........................................................Bradley Bloom

The Department of Drama would like to thank The University of Virginia Women's Club for their support in partially funding the Oklahoma! orchestra.

**DIRECTOR'S NOTES**

Thomas Hischak, in the newly released *Oxford Companion to the American Musical Theatre*, writes these words at the beginning of the entry for *Oklahoma!*: “Not only the most important of the Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein musicals, it is also the single most influential work in the American musical theatre.” He goes on: “The history of the Broadway musical can accurately be divided into what came before *Oklahoma!* and what came after it. It was the first fully integrated musical play and its blending of song, character, plot, and even dance would serve as the model for Broadway shows for decades to follow. No song from the score could be reassigned to another actor, no less another show, because each was drawn from the character so fully that it became an integral piece of the character's development within the plot. The songs in *Oklahoma!* continued the play and characterization, rather than interrupting them. Every musical number became a little one-act play of sorts. *Oklahoma!* (also) celebrated the American spirit which was particularly potent in 1943 with the country deep in World War II. (It) also celebrated the rural life, whereas most musicals were decidedly urban. The characters in the story . . . were fully developed . . . and the sincerity of their everyday emotions was refreshing . . . Even the so-called villain Jud is a complex creation, arousing conflicting emotions in the audience just as he confuses Laurey's feelings about him. Finally, *Oklahoma!* used dance as never seen before, the hoofing growing out of the characters and their emotions rather than from disjointed dance cues. Laurey's indecision about her feelings for Curly and Jud led into the famous "Laurey Makes Up Her Mind" Ballet (aka the "Dream Ballet"), the American Theatre's first fully realized psychological dance piece. (After *Oklahoma!* . . . no longer could the plot (of a musical) turn on a dime to reach its expected conclusion. No longer could a performer break out of character to sing a specialty number that had no relation to the show. And no longer could a musical be thrown together with the traditional elements of entertainment without the audience expecting some sort of cohesive logic to it all."

Personally, it was my “first show.” It was the first “movie musical” I ever saw, the first 33 rpm album I ever bought (at around age 9), the first role in a musical I ever played (Will Parker, in high school in Detroit). When I returned to directing full-time in the mid-1980's, it was one of the four musicals I directed as the new artistic director at a summer theatre in upstate New York. Yet, when our students decided that this was the musical they wanted to present this year, I was surprised. But in the past number of weeks of rehearsals, it's been a bit like revisiting a beloved old friend. What is especially gratifying is that we are possibly introducing it to an entirely new generation of theatergoers who, hopefully, can also relate to what Aunt Eller sings at the top of Act II — “I don't say I'm no better than anybody else! But I'll be damned if I ain't just as good!” A sentiment that certainly helped shape the American spirit.

Robert Chapel