



LOVERS & EXECUTIONERS

By John Strand

“Without warning, nor pity, nor even good-bye,
Upon a small island, he left her to die.”

INFORMATION

WHAT: *Lovers & Executioners* by John Strand

WHEN: March 1, 2022 to April 10, 2022

SHOWTIMES: Tuesdays at 6:30 pm, Wednesdays at 2:00 pm & 6:30 pm, Thursdays at 8:00 pm, Fridays at 8:00 pm, Saturdays at 5:00 pm & 9:00 pm and Sundays at 2:00 pm

PREVIEW: Tuesday March 1 at 6:30 pm, Wednesday March 2 at 6:30 pm, and Thursday March 3 at 8:00 pm

OPENING: Friday March 4 at 8:00 pm

WHERE: The Sofia, Mike & Bobbie Voris Mainstage, 2700 Capitol Avenue

TICKETS: \$28-\$47*, \$9 Student Rush, \$20* Preview tickets, \$25 Wednesday matinee & Saturday 9pm tickets
(TICKETS SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

TICKETS AND INFORMATION: (916) 443-5300, www.bstreettheatre.org

HEALTH & SAFETY: Proof of COVID-19 vaccine required to enter the theatre, masks must be worn at all times. For further protocols visit: <https://bstreettheatre.org/plan-your-visit/health-and-safety/>

*Please note this price includes a \$7 Facility Fee.
For details, please visit bstreettheatre.org/next-stage/fee.

"Darkly hilarious, brightly poetic and emotionally scary." – Washington City Paper

"Strand's very free adaptation is like the best comedy, wild yet precise. He's dared to translate Montfleury's 17th-century poetry into 20th-century verse, and the language rollicks along from comic anachronism to melancholy aphorism." – The Washington Post



Lovers & Executioners, by John Strand:

When nobleman Bernard (Kevin Kantor) believes that his wife Julie (Melinda Parrett) has been unfaithful, of course his only option is to strand her on a deserted island to die! Unfortunately for him, she is not so easily dispatched. Three years after her attempted murder, Julie disguises herself as a man and returns home to seek her revenge. By now, Bernard has set his sights on a younger woman (Meher Mistry), but in order to win the ingenue's heart, he'll have to cross swords with a cocky conquistador (Peter Story) and his own not-so-dead ex-wife!

With Shakespearean levels of murder and mayhem, misunderstandings and mistaken identities, John Strand has skillfully adapted this unhinged modern romp from 17th century French playwright Montfleury's commedia dell'arte piece while still preserving the original's distinct flavor.

"Rhyming couplets is one of the things I wanted to keep from the original structure," Strand said in an interview with B Street Associate Artistic Director Lyndsay Burch. "Much of the [French] comedy, and the tragedy too of course, is done in rhyming couplets. But in this case, some of the jokes are waiting for that shoe to drop. Because you're consciously aware of what that previous line was and you're waiting for that [payoff]."

Luckily, teeing up punchlines and knocking them out of the park is Artistic Director Buck Busfield's specialty, and he has packed *Lovers and Executioners* with B Street's finest comedic talent. Kantor, Parrett, Mistry, and Story are joined by special guest Terence Sims and beloved Company Members Amy Kelly and John Lamb, filling out a cast that is sure to leave the audience in stitches.

However, it's not fun and games and sword fights. Much like the rhyming couplets' structure sets up the audience for a laugh, Strand believes that those elements of humor allow the serious moments to hold more depth and weight.

"Nobody really wants, and I've never written a play like this, where it's entirely without humor whatsoever. There are plays like that, but I personally don't like sitting through them," Strand laughs during his conversation with Burch. "So in this case, we're erring way on the other side. But I think that those moments of humor set up some of the more serious parts of the play at the end." After all, this is the story of a heartbroken man who believes he has killed his wife and a heartbroken woman who just might return the favor. Will she? It's impossible to know until the very last moment!

Featuring commedia dell'arte shenanigans, dexterous swordsmanship choreographed by Karen Vance (of B Street's special holiday engagement *Tis the Season*), and the brilliant banter you've come to expect from the B Street Company, this thrilling production is sure to leave audiences breathless with laughter one moment and gasping in white-knuckled suspense the next!



THE PLAYWRIGHT:

JOHN STRAND – John Strand recently spent two years as Playwright in Residence at Arena Stage/Mead Center for American Theater, Washington, DC. He is proud to be one of Arena's commissioned playwrights for its groundbreaking Power Plays initiative. His play *The Originalist*, featuring the character of the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia played by Edward Gero, directed by Molly Smith, finished successful runs in DC (twice), Sarasota, FL., Pasadena, Chicago (Court Theater), and NYC (59E59 St. Theaters); published in 2019 by the good folks at Dramatists Play Service, NY. John wrote the book for the new musical *Snow Child* based on the novel by Eowyn Ivey, music by Georgia Stitt and Bob Banghart, lyrics by Georgia Stitt, directed by Molly Smith; premiered at Arena in April 2018. He is at work on a couple of film & television projects, including the film version of *The Originalist* and a new play, *River of Doubt* (Arena Stage commission), about the life of Teddy Roosevelt, and other projects he knows better than to talk about until they're completed. Among his other plays: *Hat! A Vaudeville* (book and lyrics); *Lincolnesque*; *Lorenzaccio* (adaptation of the 1834 classic by Alfred de Musset); *Lovers and Executioners*; *The Diaries*; *Tom Walker*; *Otabenga*; *Three Nights in Tehran*; *The Miser* (adaptation of Molière); *The Cockburn Rituals*. His novel *Commieland* is published by Kiwai Media, Paris and New York (kiwaimedia.com, and via Amazon).

THE DIRECTOR:

BUCK BUSFIELD – Buck has been involved with B Street since it was founded by his younger brother Timothy in 1986. In his tenure at B Street, Buck has served as a musician, composer and director. Buck is also a writer, having penned dozens of sketches and plays for B Street's School Tour, Family Series, Sketch Comedy Series and Mainstage. In 2018, Buck's long-held vision of a small, Midtown performing arts center was realized with the opening of the beautiful Sofia Tsakopoulos Center for the Arts. It was a labor of love, achieved by the efforts of the most talented, passionate and hard-working staff found anywhere; most notably, Bill Blake, Jerry Montoya and Lyndsay Burch, a brilliant acting company, a visionary and savvy board, and the profound generosity of an entire community.

THE CAST:

KEVIN KANTOR – (Bernard) Kevin Kantor (they/them) is a trans nonbinary actor, director, and performance poet, thrilled to return to B Street. Previously at B Street: *The Legend of Georgia McBride* and *The Sword in the Stone*. Regional: *Macbeth* (Actors Theatre of Louisville, dir. Les Waters); *The Legend of Georgia McBride*; *Things I Know to Be True*; *A Christmas Carol* (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre); *Othello*; *Twelfth Night*; *Sense and Sensibility* (Island Shakespeare Festival). Television: *American Crime* (ABC). As a poet, Kevin's writing has amassed over 20 million collective views online and has been featured in Teen Vogue, The Huffington Post, BuzzFeed, and Upworthy. Their debut full-length poetry collection *Please Come Off-Book* was released March



2021 (Button Poetry). They are an alumnus of the Actors Theatre of Louisville's Professional Training Company. @Kevin_Kantor across all platforms.

MELINDA PARRETT – (Julie/Frederic) Melinda, a member of the B Street Acting Company, is immeasurably grateful for this opportunity to return to the SOFIA with this group of rockstars. Mainstage credits include: *elemeno pea*, *Robyn is Happy*, *The Ladies Foursome*, *Dry Powder*, and *A Doll's House: Part Two*. She has performed with theatres all over the country, including Denver Center, Goodspeed Opera House, Geva Theatre, Santa Cruz Shakespeare, PCPA Theaterfest, StageWorks Fresno, Sierra Repertory Theatre, Sacramento Music Circus, Odyssey Theatre LA, and Utah Shakespeare Festival, where she has spent seven seasons. Local credits include: *The Other Place* and *The Homecoming* (Capital Stage), *Orlando* (SacImpulse), *next to normal* (New Helvetia Theatre), and *A Christmas Carol* (STC). Proud parent of her ginger cat, Burton. Thank you for supporting live theatre! www.melindaparrett.com

MEHER MISTRY – (Constance) Meher is in Sacramento from Mumbai, India, to be a part of *Lovers and Executioners*. At the B Street Theatre, her credits include *Dance Nation*, *The Conference of The Birds* and *Junie B Jones is not a Crook*. Meher has performed in several productions in Mumbai and other Indian cities, including Disney India's *Beauty and the Beast*, *Monsoon Wedding*, *The Truth*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Sound of Music*, *Lucrece*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Television credits include *The Week That Wasn't*, *Made in Heaven*, *Good Karma Hospital*. Film credits include *Silvat*, *Bansuri*, *Do Cup Chai*. Meher can also be seen in several national commercials in India, Google Pay, Amazon, Fisher-Price and Pepsodent to name a few. Instagram handle - @mehermistry. She is thrilled to be back on the B Street stage.

PETER STORY – (Don Lope) Peter is a member of the B Street Theatre Acting Company and a few of his favorite B Street credits include *One Man, Two Guvnors*; *Byhalia*, *Mississippi*; *The Forever Question*; *Ironbound*; and *A Year With Frog and Toad*. Local credits include *Luna Gale* (Capital Stage) & *Five Course Love* (Sacramento Theatre Co.) Other regional credits include *Surviving Sex* (Garry Marshall Theatre) & the national tour of the one-man *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*. Some on-camera favorites are *CSI*, *Without a Trace*, and *Days of Our Lives*. @thepeterstory

JOHN LAMB – (Guzman) John is a proud member of the B Street Theatre Core Acting Company. Mainstage credits include *A Child's Christmas in Reno*, *The House On Haunted Hill*, *Airness*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *The Book of Liz*, *Jack Goes Boating*, *The Seafarer*, *The Realistic Joneses*, and *The Explorer's Club*. Family Series credits include: *Ride Sally Ride*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Charlotte's Web*, and *The Lion, the Witch, & the Wardrobe*. B Street Theatre directing credits include: *Hand to God*, *Women who Steal*, *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*, *Earshot*, *The Maintenance Man*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *The Big Bang*. John is the creator of *Seekers of the Strange*.

TERENCE SIMS – (Octavius) Terence is thrilled to make his B Street Theatre debut. Television credits include: *4400* (CW); *Chicago Med* (NBC). Previous theatre credits



include: *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (Writer's Theatre); *Crumbs From the Table of Joy* (Raven Theatre); *Damascus* (Strawdog Theatre); *Barbecue* (Strawdog Theatre); *The Green Book* (Pegasus Theater); *Skeleton Crew* (u/s Northlight Theatre); *Monster* (Steppenwolf Theatre); *Between Riverside and Crazy* (u/s, Steppenwolf Theatre); *To Kill A Mockingbird* (Children's Theatre Madison). Terence is a member of Kinfolk Collective, an afrofuturist aesthetic tribe of artists & scholars working to rewrite and remaster the narrative of members of the African diaspora.

Amy Kelly – (Beatrice) Amy is a member of the B Street Theatre Core Acting Company. Recent Mainstage credits include: *Dance Nation*, *The House on Haunted Hill*, *The Ladies Foursome*, *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *Treatment*. Recent Family Series credit include: *A Christmas Carol*, *Charlotte's Web*, *The Sword in the Stone* and *The Wizard of Oz*. Writing credits include: *Treatment* and *Surprise Party at the End of the World* (New Play Brunch - October 2018). Amy is also a teaching artist with the B Street Theatre Conservatory and has been featured in B Street Theatre's live podcast, *Poison Boot*. Her film credits include *Nick and Tristan Go Mega Dega* (2010), *West Hollywood Motel* (2013), *Honest Abe the Backstory* (2020) and many others. She was featured in one of LA's longest running comedy shows *All About Walken: The Impersonators of Christopher Walken*. TV credits include *Free Radio*, *New York Goes to Hollywood* and Netflix's *Thirteen Reasons Why*. You can follow her on the web @ Youtube.com/amykellytv. Special thanks to the Sofia and Amy's family and wife.

More about B Street Theatre:

B Street Theatre is a non-profit, professional theatre company producing primarily new work for adults, families, and children. The two-theatre playhouse on 2700 Capitol Avenue in Midtown Sacramento is home to the Mainstage Series and Family Series, each created to feature intimate, quality theatre for audiences year-round. Recognized as one of the nation's top professional theatres, B Street Theatre has produced more than 160 world premieres written by B Street playwrights and numerous productions which were world, national, West Coast, or regional premieres.

B Street Theatre was originally founded in 1986 with the purpose of bringing the excitement of live performance to children through the B Street Theatre School Tour. This educational outreach program still serves over 200,000 students in Northern California annually.

B Street Theatre programs include the Mainstage Series, B Street Theatre Family Series and Family Series Field Trips, B Street School Assemblies, Upstairs at the B, B Street Acting Conservatory and Studio for Young People, and the B Street Theatre Internship program for pre-professional/post-college training.

In 2014, B Street brought its most popular play ever, *Around the World in 80 Days*, to India. The original cast performed in three Indian cities, furthering the organization's



mission by bringing high quality theatre to an international audience, while also raising money for Indian educational enrichment and schools and partnering with an overseas performing arts center with the hope of future international collaboration. B Street Theatre has produced over 250 professional productions since 1986.

More information at www.bstreettheatre.org.

The mission of B Street Theatre is to promote education and literacy, social interaction, and cultural enrichment by engaging children and adults in the highest quality theatre arts and playwriting.

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