

## Artist Spotlight: Beverly Mitchell

In attempting to describe Beverly Mitchell, one might borrow loosely from her favorite writer, Shakespeare:

“...she hath borne herself beyond the promise of her age, doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion: she hath, indeed better bettered expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how...”

Although the quote is copied from *Much Ado about Nothing*, her life might be filled with “much ado,” but it is certainly not “about nothing.”

Midst taking care of two dogs and a cat — she has served as officer for Pet Pals of Maury County — she is an actor, director, editor, translator, adapter, teacher, writer, lecturer, board member and mentor. There are other things that might have been left out, more “than you must expect of me to tell you how.”



After attending high school in Memphis, Tennessee, she chose a small college not far from home in Conway, Arkansas. With a degree in French from Hendrix College, she had no idea of the accomplishments that lay ahead for her in the worlds of languages, art, theater, and academia.

Her studying French opened an interest in all languages and a study of Literary Translation for her Masters of Fine Arts at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. There she served as a graduate assistant and began her work as a translator, co-founding and co-editing *Lazarus, A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Translation*. During this period, she found the time to serve as Resident Poet for “Poetry in the Schools Program” and as a panel member at an American Literary Translators Association Conference.

Receiving an assistantship to the University of Texas

at Dallas, Beverly began her graduate studies in Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies. Here she basically began her academic career by teaching as an adjunct at Richland Community College in Dallas and at Collin Community College in McKinney, Texas.

In addition to much work in translating and book reviews for *Translation Review*, it was her experience with the renowned Yugoslavian director, Ljubisa Georgievski that really led her into the arts and theater. She not only translated *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* from the Serbian, but served as the assistant director for Georgievski’s production.

After stints at other community colleges, Beverly settled at Columbia State Community College in 1990, and “beyond the promise of her age” began “the feats of a lion.” She served on the Faculty Senate numerous times, presented at the campus Literary Symposium, was writer and recipient of a number of grants from the Tennessee Arts Commission, and was a member of the Socratic Society, presenting papers on, among others, Genghis Khan and Sherlock Holmes. Her contributions to the campus have been astronomical, so much so that in 2009, she was recipient of the Phi Theta Kappa Faculty Appreciation Award.

She has excelled as a writer and encouraged creative writing among her students. Her *Hamlet for Community Theatre*, *Maury Voices*, *Voices of the West*, *The Emily Project*, *Those Wicked Stepsisters*, *Bed Time Stories*, *‘Twas the Night Before Christmas*, and *Pinosio* are known by Middle Tennessee audiences, as well as her adaptations and translations: *A Christmas Carol*, *Mansfield Park*, *The Misanthrope* (adapted and translated from the French text by Moliere), and *The Velveteen Rabbit*. Her encouragement of the students through *Perceptions*, a publication on the Columbia State campus, was honored by the creation of the Beverly Mitchell Creative Writing Award in 2021, an award to be given each year to a student for their work submitted to *Perceptions*.

(continued on page 2)

## Artist Spotlight (continued)

Columbia stages have not only seen Beverly's writings performed but have also seen her act in numerous productions — *A Winter's Tale*, *King John*, *The Misanthrope*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Oliver*, *Dracula*, *The Crucible*, *Into the Woods*, and others — but it is as a director that Columbia is most acquainted with her work. The Maury County Arts Guild, Watershed Public Theatre, Building Block School for the Arts and the Spring Hill Arts Center have all presented her work, many of them classic dramas: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Tempest*, *Twelfth Night*, *Antigone*, *Macbeth*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

If amid her present positions on the Columbia Arts Council, the Watershed Public Theatre and Center of Hope, she can find the time to direct the one show she wishes she could do, *King Lear*, the area will continue to experience the "feats of a lion" much "beyond the promise of her age."



Beverly Mitchell is a founding member of the Watershed Public Theatre board of directors which first formed in 2016. Some of the inaugural board members are pictured above: (l to r) Terri Thompson, Kate Foreman, Beverly Mitchell and Becky Leifheit.

## Be a Patron of the Arts

Want to show your support for the arts? The Tennessee Specialty License Plate Program provides revenue for arts and cultural activities



statewide. Watershed Public Theatre receives funding as a result of this program, and you can help! Visit [tnspecialtyplates.org](https://www.tnspecialtyplates.org) for more details or stop by your county clerk's office to purchase a personalized or specialty plate.

## Journeyman Troupe Application is Open

Watershed Public Theatre began the Journeyman Troupe immersive training program in 2018 to provide low-cost opportunities for teens and adults to enhance their theatre skills and learn about the professional theatre process. In August 2021, the program expanded to run in conjunction with the company's season of programming, providing even more in-depth training opportunities.

The program includes three training components: direct instruction, mentorship and hands-on production experience. Direct instruction is provided in the form of workshops that cover a broad spectrum of theatre topics, such as character development, costume design, stage combat and many others. Troupe participants are also paired with mentors — theatre professionals with specialized skills — to provide advice and guidance on their areas of focus. Hands-on experience is gained by working on productions throughout the season. Participants are required to work on at least one production to complete the program and will have the opportunity to work on all productions, whether as a performer onstage, part of the backstage crew or assisting the administrative and marketing team.

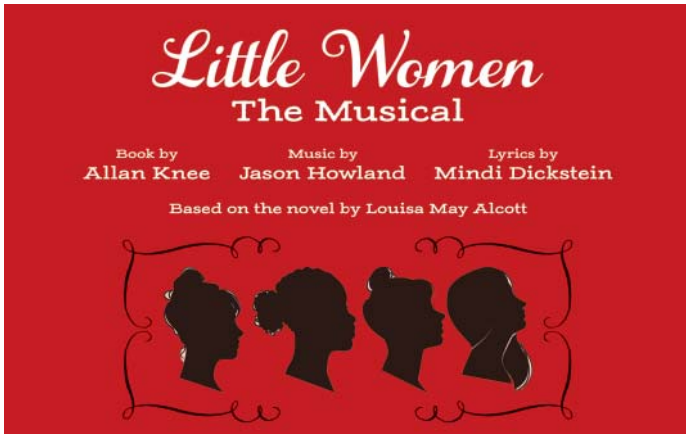
WPT is accepting applications for the 2022-23 Journeyman Troupe until July 1. The program is open to anyone age 16 and up who is looking to gain experience in either performance or theatrical production work. To learn more information and apply, visit [WatershedPublicTheatre.org/Education](https://WatershedPublicTheatre.org/Education).



The 2019 Journeyman Troupe were featured performers in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. \*Denotes Troupe member: (l to r) Hilary Frame, William Meyer\*, Xyz Hoogveen\*, Seth Bennett and Bella Coyne\*

## WPT's 2022-23 Season

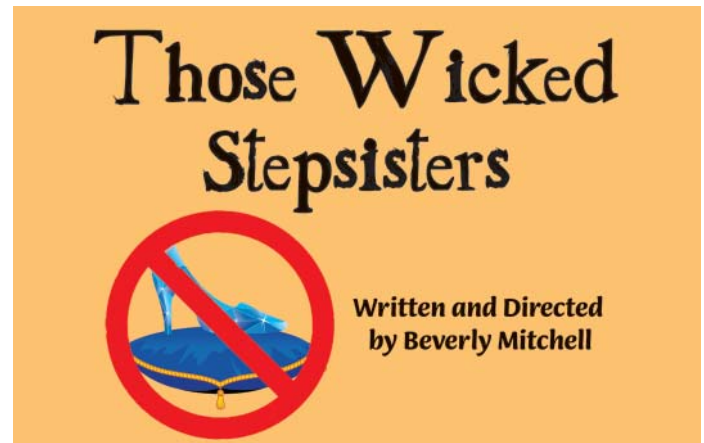
In May, Watershed Public Theatre announced the line-up for the 2022-23 season featuring four productions.



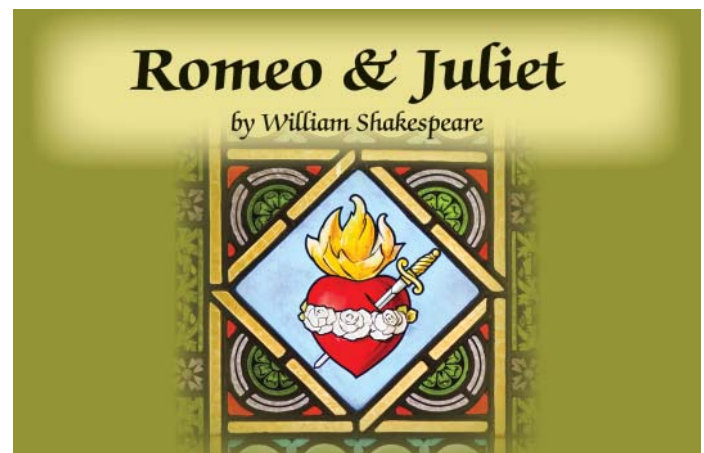
The season opens September 30 with the company's largest production to date: *Little Women the Musical*, book by Allan Knee, music by Jason Howland, lyrics by Mindi Dickstein. Based on Louisa May Alcott's life, *Little Women* follows the adventures of sisters Jo, Meg, Beth and Amy March and their formative years growing up in Civil War America. This timeless, captivating story is brought to life with beautiful music and creative staging.



Dinner theatre returns for the holidays with "A Christmas Cabaret" at Mt. Pleasant Grille, with three performances December 9-11, 2022. Enjoy a delicious meal while being serenaded with jazz arrangements of Christmas songs. Performances will feature Nashville-based jazz pianist Wydell Croom playing several favorites along with other talented musicians.



Did you ever wonder what happens to the stepsisters after Cinderella marries her prince and gets to live happily ever? Find out at *Those Wicked Stepsisters* March 3-5, 2023. This delightful play written and directed by Beverly Mitchell is entertaining and fun for all ages. Touring and field trip performances are available for school groups through March 11, 2023; contact [education@watershedtheatre.org](mailto:education@watershedtheatre.org) for information on booking a school group.



The Summer Classics series continues in 2023 with William Shakespeare's beautiful and compelling tragedy of *Romeo & Juliet*. The timeless tale of two young star-crossed lovers remains one of the most beloved plays of all time. Featuring direction by Brad Oxnam, performances run June 9-18, 2023.

Season membership passes are now available for purchase. Each pass includes three tickets redeemable for any non-dinner performance plus discounts on dinner theatre tickets. Learn more at [WatershedPublicTheatre.org](http://WatershedPublicTheatre.org).

Watershed Public Theatre  
PO Box 441  
Columbia, TN 38402



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# Pride and Prejudice

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JUNE 26, 2022 3:00 PM



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