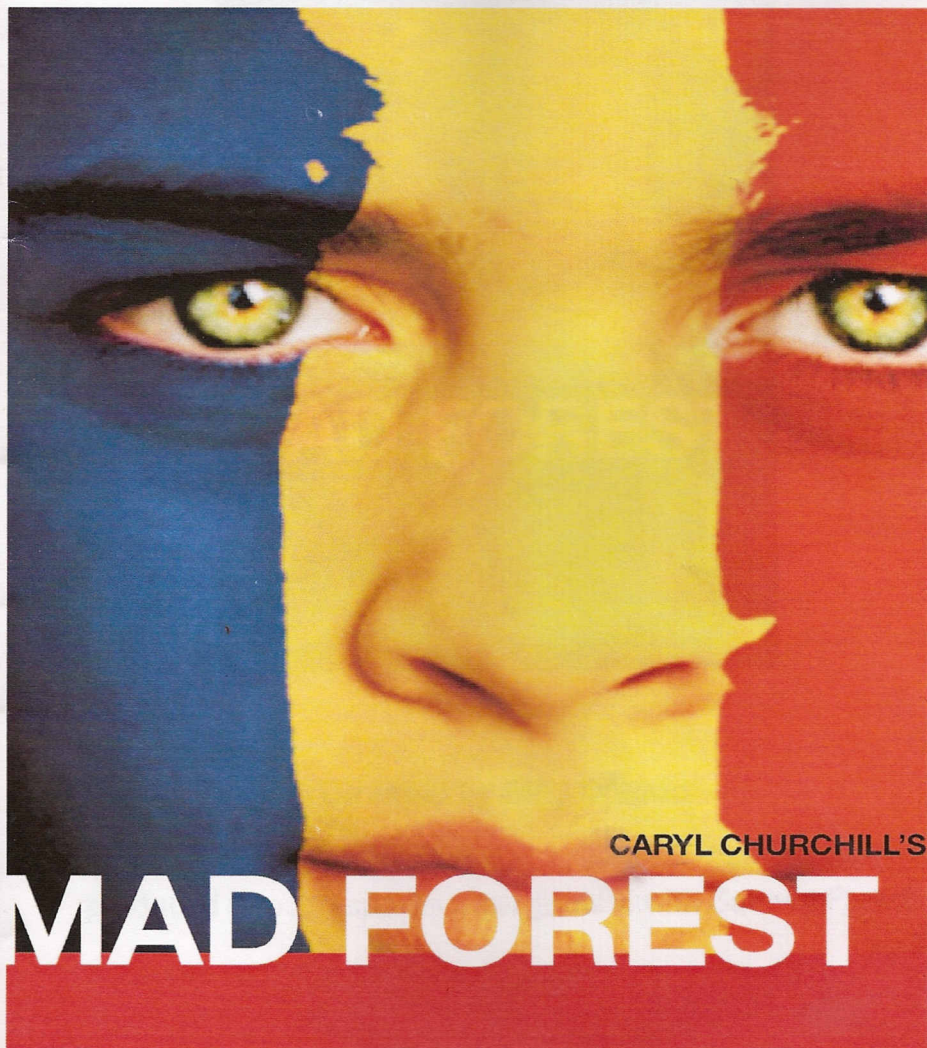


Playbill

The Austin High School Red Dragon Players

present the 393rd production



CARYL CHURCHILL'S

MAD FOREST

AUDIENCE INFORMATION

Photography – with or without flash – is not permitted during the performance. We also respectfully remind you that excessive noise is distracting to the performers and to the other patrons. **Please turn off cellular phones and ALL electronic devices.** Crying babies and uncooperative children should be escorted outside.

There will be one 15 minute intermission between Acts I and II, during which concessions will be sold, and a ten-minute intermission between Acts II and III.

Food, drinks or any kind, and candy are not allowed inside the theater.

Restrooms are located in the lobby of the Performing Arts Center.

Thank you for your cooperation in making this an enjoyable environment.

The Red Dragon Circle Members

Amy Becker
Craig Berlin
Lanora Davidson
Annie Dragoo
Cindy Holt
Diana Mateja

Marcia Millikin
Gina Newton
Leslie Ragland
Patti Schroeder
John Williams



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

I came across this play in the mid-1990s and remember feeling like I had begun reading a novel halfway through. It was bold and mysterious to be sure, yet simultaneously satisfying and unsatisfying. A viewing of a Dallas-area high school's UIL production did nothing to clarify but still intrigued me.

Fast-forward over a decade, and here I am with a group of 40+ students attempting to make sense of it. The mutability of family life (quarrels, jealousies, spoken and unspoken affections), the "micro-politics of the everyday" -- these are the kinds of situations that have always fascinated me. I enjoy the challenge of directing such scenes, trying to collaborate with the kids to bring meaning to such a dense puzzle. I have always been a questioner, and this play has left me with even more to ask. The script offers much to discover about isolation, silence, mistrust, alienation, and deep divisions within and between families.

I find Act Two to be particularly moving. The verbatim transcripts from interviews of people who were there made me want to learn more about life under Communist rule. It's made me wonder if distinctions like *public* and *private* have any meaning in a paranoid society, and it has given me a greater appreciation of having been born into a free one.

Initially, the students were not very fond of the script. And I have little doubt that many audience members will dislike it, too. That's okay with me. My hope is that whether you like it or dislike it, you will discuss it. I'm an educator, and the fact that one student said, "You know, Mr. Dragoo, before this play, I didn't even know there was a Romanian revolution in 1989" -- that has made its mounting worthwhile.

Thank you for supporting our young artists.

TIMELINE OF THE FALL OF CEAUSESCU

December 15 -- Father Laszlo Tokes spoke out publicly against Ceausescu in the town of Timisoara. Backed by thousands, the riot police arrived to try and remove Tokes and disperse the crowd. A noisy and bloody battle ensued in the streets.

December 16 -- Securitate and the army were called in to restore order. The United States State Department reacts with, "It looks like Romania's time may have finally come", although the majority of the world still believed that Ceausescu will successfully maintain control.

December 17 -- A huge crowd amassed in Timisoara. The crowd became aggressive and marched on the Communist Headquarters at city hall. The demonstration was severely anti-government, as portraits of Ceausescu were burned and thrown from the building. The army used tear gas, water cannons, tanks and ammunition against the crowd. Many people were killed. The dead bodies were sent to Bucharest to be cremated.

December 18 -- The Executive Political Committee in Bucharest ordered the army to begin firing real bullets into the Timisoara crowd. Civilian casualties ran high. The dead were collected by the army and either thrown in mass graves or burned.

December 19 -- The resistance continued in western Romania, and the death count grew. It is believed that some of the army began to switch over to the side of the demonstrators on this day, although proof is impossible.

December 20 -- Negotiators from Bucharest were sent to Timisoara, but really only to buy time so that new elite troops could arrive to "crush the rebellion". The Securitate continued firing on demonstrators in the street. Ceausescu arrived home from a visit to Iran and proclaimed martial law. He also blamed the uprising on Hungarian Fascists.

TIMELINE OF THE FALL OF CEAUSESCU

December 21 -- In a televised speech, Ceausescu addressed a crowd in Bucharest. They became violent and tried to break police lines. A clash ensued in which at least thirteen youths were killed. Protests began breaking out all over the capitol, and the police began arresting demonstrators. The crowds refused to disperse and the police used gunfire and armored cars against the people.

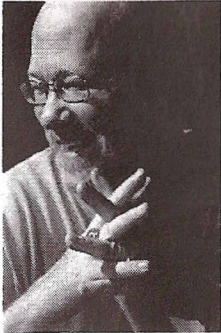
December 22 -- Even more demonstrators began to reassemble early in the morning. Huge crowds were locked in a standoff with the army in the main square of Bucharest. Reports of dissidence between Ceausescu and his army caused the crowd to start chanting: "The army is with us!" The crowd offered the soldiers cigarettes and flowers and the battle seemed to be shifting to one between the army and Ceausescu's security police. In a last ditch effort, Ceausescu tried to speak from a balcony, but was shouted down. He and his wife fled the capital and made plans to leave Romania.

December 23 -- Confusion reigned. Fighting and brutality escalated in the streets. Some soldiers had switched over to the side of the people and continued to battle the Securitate forces. Ceausescu and his wife were captured and returned to Bucharest. Ion Iliescu emerged as a leader of the National Front and gave the government a list of demands.

December 24 -- The army continued to battle the Securitate in Bucharest. The National Front claimed control of the revolution and established a provisional government. Uncertainty and terror still prevailed in the streets. Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu were put on trial. He was unapologetic and refused to recognize the decision of the courts. In a matter of about two hours, they were both found guilty, sentenced to death, and executed.

December 25 -- The Ceausescu's bodies were exhibited on TV, marking the end of the initial stages of revolution. Despite this, fighting continued both in the capitol and in Timisoara. It is unclear when complete order was restored and even more unclear when Romania was able to regroup after these 11 days of revolution.

AHS THEATRE DIRECTOR



Director **BILLY DRAGOO** taught at Granbury High School and Bowie High School in Arlington before coming to Austin High in the fall of 1993. Mr. Dragoo earned a BFA from The University of Texas in 1987 and a Master of Arts from The University of London in 1990. In the summer of 2002, Mr. Dragoo was granted a scholarship to study at the Globe Theatre in

London. He has directed 74 shows in his career. Among his favorites are *Equus*, *The Secret Rapture*, *A Flea in Her Ear*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *Juno and the Paycock* and *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me*. He and his students at have appeared at the UIL One Act Play State Finals six times. Granbury High School appeared there in 1988 (taking third place in AAAA) and in 1989. Austin High School appeared there in 2007, 2008, 2009 (when they won the AAAA State Championship), and in 2010. While teaching at Austin High, he has twice been named "Teacher of the Year" -- in 1997 and 2003.

Special Thanks

Tonight's performances would not have been made possible without the assistance and support of the following people.

Austin High School Faculty
Dr. Lucio Calzada
Annie Dragoo
Cindy Holt
The Red Dragon Circle
Unity Church of Austin

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Born in London on September 3, 1938, **Caryl Churchill** grew up in England and Canada. In 1960, she received a BA in English from Oxford University. After graduation, she began to write radio plays for the BBC. The radio play genre greatly influenced Churchill, forcing her to develop a certain economy of style, and giving her the freedom to write very short scenes, with great leaps in time and space.

She served as resident dramatist at the Royal Court Theatre from 1974 to 1975. For over a decade, she also collaborated with theatre companies such as Joint Stock and Monstrous Regiment, both of which utilized an extended workshop period in their development of new plays and both of which are generally considered to have had a deep impact on Churchill's development as a playwright. Her successes during these years included *Light Shining on Buckinghamshire* (1976), *Vinegar Tom* (1976), *Cloud Nine* (1979), and *A Mouthful of Birds* (1986).

Even after striking out on her own, Churchill continued to utilize an improvisational workshop setting in the development of some of her plays. *Mad Forest: A Play from Romania* (1990) was written after Churchill, the director and a group of student actors from London's Central School of Drama went to Romania to work with acting students there and to find out more about the events surrounding the fall of Ceausescu. What finally emerged from this process was a play that revealed the dreadful damage done to people's lives by years of repression and the painful difficulties of lasting change.

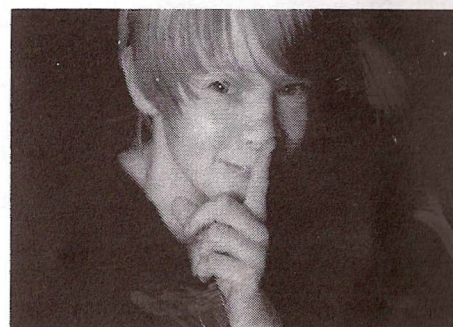
Her awards include three Obie Awards (1982, 1983 & 1988) and a Society of West End Theatre Award (1988).

MAD FOREST CAST

Tourist	Mackenzie Nissen
Bogdan	Jackson Minton
Irina	Katie Berlin
Florina	Catherine Schwartz
Lucia	Aubrey Elenz
Mihai	Blake Nixon
Flavia	Ria Agarwal
Radu	Cooper Acord
Doctor/Soldier/Soldier 2	Andrew Newton
Ianos	Joseph Cooper
Gabriel	Steven Salinas
Angel	Stevie Bush
Soldier 1/Priest	Rolando Huertas
Soldier/Translator/Dog	Brazos Bell
Waiter/Toma	Nick Williams
Flavia's Grandmother/Student 2	Jasmin Weber
Rodica	Mireille Blond
Securitate Man/Wayne/Student 1/Vampire	Billy Rainey
Painter / Patient / Ghost	Felipe Ramirez
Girl Student	Maggie Miller
Bulldozer Driver	Zach Completo
Student Doctor	Madeline Pesoli
Securitate Officer/Lucia's Grandfather	William Hinojosa
House Painter	Katherine Schroeder
Flower Seller	Kayla Litz
Someone with Sore Throat	Elysia Roque
Lucia's Grandmother	Sophia Castro
Woman Who Looks Out Door/Old Aunt	Luz Torres
Crowd	Sarah Dodson
	Savannah Grubbs

Mad Forest Production Crew

Stage Managers	Josh Wilson
Light Board Ops	Audrey Furlong
	Kat Mateja
Sound Board Ops	Matilda Westerman
	Onno Rademaker
Running Crew	Placido Alfaro
	Ethan Guion
Costume Crew	Haley Wilson



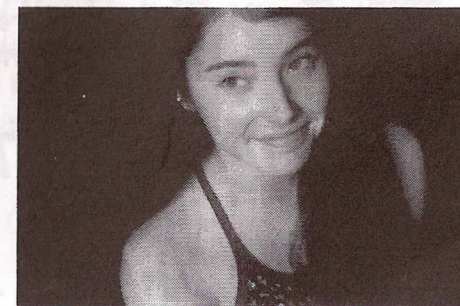
Break a leg, Josh!

We are proud of you!

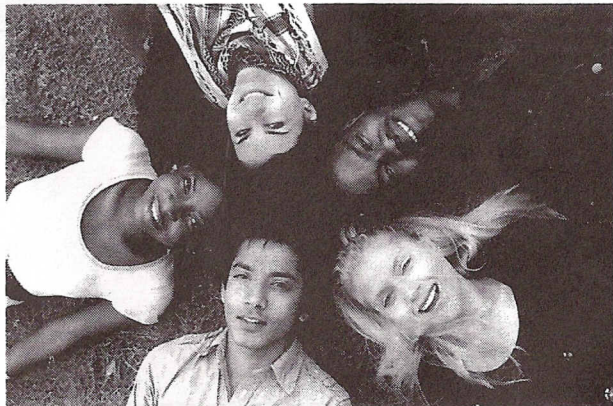
Peace out sucka...
Baboo, Dad, Eddie,
Haley, Mom, Sadie

Mireille,
We are so proud
of you!

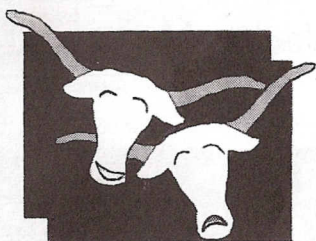
Love,



Unity church of Austin Teen Encounter



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Who's Who in the Cast

Junior **COOPER ACORD** (Radu) has worked on two prior RDP productions – *Into the Woods* (crew) and *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Peter). At Fulmore MS, he appeared in *The Rivers and Ravines* and *The Dining Room*. He was last seen this past summer as Tony in *You Can't Take it With You* in The Vortex Theatre's SYT program.

Junior **RIA AGARWAL** (Flavia) has worked on many plays here as a Red Dragon Player, including *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *Into the Woods*, *Wonderland High*, and several others. She has appeared in both *Six Degrees of Separation* and *Talking With*, and she is very excited to take part in this new production!

Senior **BRAZOS BELL** (Soldier / Translator / Dog) is making his Red Dragon Players debut!

Junior **KATIE BERLIN** (Irina) is appearing in her fifth Austin High production. Last seen in the Red Dragon's world premiere of *Wonderland High*, her favorite show thus far, Katie has also done workshops at the State Theater and Zachary Scott. She is in the musical theater class and also a member of the AHS softball team.

Sophomore **MIREILLE BLOND** (Rodica) will be performing in her first non-musical play at Austin High. She has been in *The Reluctant Dragon*, *All I Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, and *Wonderland High*. She is in the Academy of Global Studies, involved in Model UN, and is the videographer for the International Thespian Society.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

STEVIE BUSH (Angel) is a sophomore here at Austin High. Previous plays she's been in here have been *Talking With*, *All I Really Need To Know I Learned In Kindergarten*, and *The Reluctant Dragon*. She looks forward to how this show will come together!

Sophomore **SOPHIA CASTRO** (Lucia's Grandmother) is appearing in her first Red Dragons production. In middle school she was in *The Crucible* and a few other shows. Thanks to my mom for always being there!

Junior **ZACH COMPLETO** (Bulldozer Driver) is appearing in his 5th production. He worked on crews for *Season's Greetings*, *Major Barbara*, and *Wonderland High*, and played the Doorman in *Six Degrees of Separation*. Thank you, Dad, for always driving me to and from rehearsals, even though you dreaded it.

Senior **JOSEPH COOPER** (Ianos) has been a Red Dragon Player for 3 years now, and this is his 4th appearance on the Austin High stage. He was a cast member of *Reckless*, a 2010 UIL One-Act Play State finalist. During the Summer, he was given a role in the Independent film "Austin High" filmed in Austin.

Junior **AUBREY ELENZ** (Lucia) has worked on seven previous shows at Austin High. Some of her favorites were *Season's Greetings* and *Reckless*. She has loved working with the cast of *Mad Forest* and would like to thank Mr. Dragoo for creating such a wonderful show.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Junior **SARAH DODSON** (Crowd Member) is making her Red Dragon debut. Besides theatre, she is actively involved with the AHS Peer Assistance Leadership program.

Sophomore **SAVANNAH GRUBBS** (Crowd Member) is appearing for the first time on the AHS Stage. At Clint Small Middle School, she appeared in *The Sound of Music*.

Sophomore **WILLIAM HINOJOSA** (Claudiu Brad / Lucia's Grandfather) is participating in his first Red Dragon Production. He hopes it will be the first of many.

Senior **ROLANDO HUERTAS** (Priest) is appearing in his third Red Dragon production. He was previously seen in *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* and *Wonderland High*. Originally from Massachusetts, he is a three year member of the AHS Choir.

Junior **KAYLA LITZ** (Flower Seller) is participating in her 2nd AHS Red Dragon production. She was the snake handler in *Talking with*.

Sophomore **MAGGIE MILLER** (Girl Student) is in her second year at Austin High and is part of the AGS program. In her freshman year, she appeared in *Talking With*, *Wonderland High*, and *All I Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. She is also the Life and Arts Editor for The Maroon Newspaper, and is the proud Clerk for the ITS Council. She would like to thank all her friends and family for their support.

Freshman **ELYSIA ROQUE** (Patient With Sore Throat) is making her debut on the AHS stage. At Small MS, Elysia appeared in *A Typical Day* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. Thanks Mom and Dad.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Freshman **ANDREW NEWTON** (Doctor / Soldier / Soldier 2) is making his debut on the AHS stage. At Small MS, Andrew appeared in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *A Typical Day*.

Freshman **MACKENZIE NISSEN** (Tourist) is making her RDP debut.

Senior **BLAKE NIXON** (Mihai) is appearing in his sixth Red Dragon production. He has participated in both musicals and straight plays as both an actor and a stage manager. His favorite show to work on was *Wonderland High*. He would like to thank Lynn Kent for getting him started in theater.

Junior **MADLINE PESOLI** (Student Doctor) is participating in her fourth play at Austin High but only her second as a speaking character. She looks forward to the plays to come and would like to thank her parents and her brother for being such a big support.

Junior **BILLY RAINEY** (Securitate Man / Wayne / Student 1 / Vampire) is taking part in his second production on the Red Dragon stage. He was previously seen as Parker in *Wonderland High* and is excited to continue his Red Dragon career. Billy is also active in Youth and Government, as well as Musical Theatre.

Sophomore **FELIPE RAMIREZ** (Painter / Patient / Ghost) was in last season's *Wonderland High*. This summer, he played the role of Paul in the Vortex SYT production of *You Can't Take It With You*.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Junior **STEVEN SALINAS** (Gabriel) is appearing in his second Red Dragon production. He previously appeared as a Nazi in *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Thanks Mom and Dad.

Junior **KATHERINE SCHROEDER** (House Painter) is appearing in her sixth Red Dragon production. She has also appeared in *Talking With* and *The Reluctant Dragon*. Besides theatre, she enjoys photography and gardening.

Junior, **CATHERINE SCHWARTZ** (Florina) is portraying her sixth character as a Red Dragon Player. She has previously been featured in such works as Alan Ayckbourn's *Seasons Greetings* and Jim Merrilat's *Wonderland High*. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Junior **LUZ TORRES** (Woman Who Looks Out Door / Old Aunt) is appearing in her first Red Dragon production. Thank you, Mommy and Grandma for being patient in living in a house quiet as a graveyard.

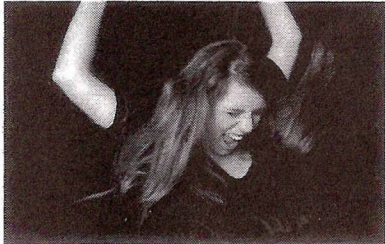
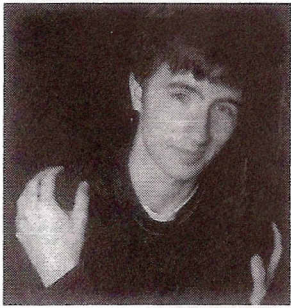
Junior **JASMIN WEBER** (Flavia's Grandmother / Student 2) was last seen at the State Meet in *Reckless*. She has enjoyed learning a Romanian accent.

Freshman **NICK WILLIAMS** (Waiter / Toma) is making his debut on our stage, although he has been singing and acting in public for a while.

Sophomore **JOSH WILSON** (Stage Manager) is taking part in his third Red Dragon Production. Last year, he ran lights for *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* and served as stage manager of *Wonderland High*. He is a member of the International Thespian Society.

Daniel Becker Photography™

Official Photographer of the Red Dragon Players



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Austin High School Theatre

It takes a community to raise a production! That's why we need your support to continue to produce exceptional educational theatre. Join parents & community members in supporting the AHS Theatre Department by becoming a member of our booster club, The Red Dragon Circle.



Red Dragon Circle

Membership has its privileges.

Become a member online

There are many different levels of membership, each with privileges for its members. Not only do members support young artists, but they are making a tax deductible donation.

Go to www.RedDragonPlayers.com and fill out the online registration. Choose your level of membership and the perks that come with it. You can now pay with your debit or credit card online.