THE AMERICAN ACTORS COMPANY PRESENTS

Valley

Heathen

BY ROMULUS LINNEY

October 14, 15, 18, 20, 22, at 8:00 p.m.
October 16 and 23 at 2:00 p.m.

Jones Theatre
Romulus Linney is the author of three novels, many short stories and forty plays, produced throughout the United States and abroad. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Letters, which gave him its Award in Literature and its Award of Merit Medal for Drama.

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Heathen Valley
by Romulus Linney

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Program cover by Terry Roller
About The Play

Playwright Romulus Linney has deep roots in the Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina. His great-grandfather was a senator and lived in Boone and Taylorsville, NC. Linney spent his first few years and then summers until he was fourteen in the family home in Boone, and he grew up in Madison, TN. As a young man he again spent time in Boone and took a class in Old English and Scottish Popular Ballads at Appalachian State University in 1952. When he turned from acting to writing, he used the history and folklore surrounding the beginnings of Valle Crucis, a small town next to Boone, in his first novel, Heathen Valley.

The central plot line of the novel and its dramatization are drawn from the actual lives and events surrounding the arrival of the Episcopal bishop in the mountains of North Carolina in the 1840s. Linney read the brief account by Susan Fenimore Cooper, William West Skiles: Missionary Life in Valle Crucis (1890) and used this as a source for the factual information in the play. The real Bishop Ives made it his personal mission to bring the word of Christ to the backwards people living in a desolate valley discovered by the botanist Asa Gray who termed it “the valley that forgot God.” Ives’ deacon was William West Skiles who is still lovingly commemorated in the Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross in Valle Crucis and whose body is buried next to St. John’s Episcopal Church, the church with no corners in the sanctuary that Skiles helped build. The story and its characters, especially Skiles, were fictionalized by Linney who said that “In Heathen Valley there are many rural Southern Appalachian characters but they are definitely stylized.” The 1962 novel was a source of considerable controversy in Valle Crucis whose residents thought that the thinly veiled story of their town reflected badly on their ancestors.

Twenty-five years later, Linney returned to this first novel and successfully dramatized it. Initially, the play appears to be the story of a small area of the mountains of North Carolina populated by the isolated mountain people who live with superstition and for whom sheer survival is almost impossible. The conflict between the native mountaineers and the outside religious reformers is what provides a broader message and makes the story universal beyond its mountain roots.

The play was first read at the Denver Centre Theatre and then performed in Philadelphia in 1987 and by the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre the following year. Heathen Valley received the National Theatre Critics Award for an outstanding new play in the resident theatres of the U.S. and is included in Best Plays of 1987-88. In the fall of 1988, the play was performed at Appalachian State University, the first of a number of North Carolina productions, and it was the second production directed by someone other than Linney. San Diego Repertory Theatre opened its production a few days before the one at Appalachian. Since 1988, Heathen Valley has been produced at numerous theatres across the country including the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

While the productions in Boone and later in Valle Crucis may have had an authenticity in the understanding of the mountain characters and the sounds of the dialect, the conflict has had an appeal that transcends the sometimes violent story of the arrival of civilization to a rustic area of the south. Romulus Linney knows the mountains, the stories and the people but also has a rich understanding of human beings wherever they live. His sharp ability to depict human conflict gives his plays a wide-ranging popularity.

Susan S. Cole
Appalachian State University

Romulus Linney: “I don’t consider myself a North Carolina writer, I am not a writer who delivers the real life of the land and the people of North Carolina as they are. I’m not really writing about the South. I use my Southern heritage to tell a story, not illustrate the southern Appalachian mountains. I use the background to tell the story; the story itself is the most important thing.”
Richard Bowden (Bishop) appeared in Baylor's _The Traveling Lady_ as the Judge. In New York, he appeared on Broadway in _Captain Brassbound's Conversion_ with Ingrid Bergman, Romulus Linney's _Heathen Valley_ at Signature Theatre, and three of Linney's plays at EST. He toured in _Macbeth_ with Anthony Quayle, and _Sherlock Holmes_ with Kurt Kasznar. Regional shows include Kennedy Center's _The Physicists_ with Irene Worth, Alliance Theatre's _Cyrano_ with John Cullum; Missouri Rep's _King Lear_, Walnut Street's _Old Devils_, Center Stage's _Tempest_, Indiana Rep's _Much Ado_, Claremont Brown's _The Heiress_, Charlotte Rep's _Dracula_, Pioneer Theatre's _Letter to Lovoage_, Barter Theatre's _Dear Liar_, and Florida Studio's _Wit_, and Linney's "27." Richard has worked with the American, New Jersey, Great Lakes, Georgia, DC, and Riverside Shakespeare Festivals, plus Stock and Off/Off Broadway Productions. He studied at the University of Georgia, and the University of Bristol, England.

Pam Dougherty (Juba) most recently appeared as Kate in _Brighton Beach Memoirs_ at Oklahoma City Repertory Theatre, and as Fraulein Schneider in Water Tower Theatre's _Cabaret_. A busy 2004 found her in productions of _Cooking With Lord, A Fiddler on the Roof, The Tale of the Allergist's Wife_ and _The Spitfire Grill_. Pam has performed in almost every professional theatre in North Texas, with memorable roles in _The Laramie Project, Lemonade, Cowgirls, Euripides' Ion, Lost in Yonkers_ and _Broadway Bound_. She works frequently in radio and television, and among her film credits are _Dr. T and the Women, Universal Soldier-The Return, and A Woman of Independent Means_. As its first Texas-based actor, Pam served from 1994-2003 on the National Council of Actors' Equity Association, and continues to advocate for professional actors with work on both local and national AEA committees.

Steven Pounders (Billy) received his MFA in acting from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There he performed as a member of PlayMakers Repertory Company in a number of productions including _The Rivals, Loves Labours Lost, Misalliance_, and the first production of David Hammond's original _Nutcracker_. More recent credits include productions at the WaterTower Theatre in Dallas: _Cabaret, Dinner with Friends, Nocturne_, and _Book of Days_; Theatre Britain in Dallas: _The Day After the Fair and Betrayal, Driving Miss Daisy_ at the Oklahoma Shakespeare Festival, and _1776_ at Casa Manana in Fort Worth. This year Steven appeared with _Heathen Valley_ director Marion Castleberry in an original production titled _God and Mammon_ by Baylor Theatre Arts colleague DeAnna Toten Beard. The play premiered at the WaterTower Theatre's Out of the Loop Festival. Steven is a member of Baylor University's Theatre Arts faculty.

Scott Sowers (Starns) has performed in dozens of productions, workshops, readings and seminars featuring Mr. Linney's body of work spanning 17 years, including founding the 'Signature Theatre' in New York, along with Mr. Linney and James Houghton. He has performed all over the country in theaters that include: Signature Theatre, The Ensemble Studio Theatre, The Triangle Theatre Company, The Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Actor's Theatre of Louisville, The Philadelphia Theater Company, The Theater for a New City, and he shared in the honor of being a cast member of Mr. Linney's, "Gint": the first American production to be invited to participate in the International Ibsen Festival in Norway. This is his fourth trip up and down the slopes of "Heathen Valley". Each and every endeavor has been a privilege.

Adrienne Thompson (Cora) is happy to be in Texas celebrating the work of her favorite playwright, Romulus Linney. Since 1985 she has acted in Mr. Linney's _A Woman Without A Name, Pops, Three Poets, Sand Mountain, Matchmaking, Tonight We Love_, readings of _Can Can, F/M, Gint_ (Ibsen Festival in Oslo, Norway), and participated in the Inge Festival's celebration of Mr. Linney's work. She teaches production classes for the Department of Dramatic Writing (DDW) at Tisch School of the Arts, NYU and is the Associate Artistic Director of the First Look Theatre Company.

David Van Pelt (Harlan) In New York, Mr. Van Pelt has worked with Actors Playhouse Abingdon, The Mint, Melting Pot, Currican, Theatre for the New City, and Signature Theatres. Regional work includes Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Globe, Denver Center, Long Wharf, Huntington, Wisconsin Shakespeare, and Pittsburgh Public Theatres. He played Pete Gint in Mr. Linney's _Gint_ at the 1998 International Ibsen Festival in Oslo, Norway. His debut was in the National Tour of _A Few Good Men_. David earned his BFA from the North Carolina School of the Arts and is the proud papa of young Clyde Chaplain Van Pelt.
CAST
Billy ............................................. Steven Pounders
Stars ............................................. Scott Sowers
Bishop ......................................... Richard Bowden
Cora ............................................ Adrienne Thompson
Juba ............................................. Pam Dougherty
Harlan ......................................... David Van Pelt

Place: The Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina
Time: 1850s

Production Crew
Assistant Director                        Daniel Inouye
Stage Manager                            Stew Awalt
Assistant Stage Manager                   Deborah Benesh
Assistant Lighting Designer               Ryan Joynor
Assistant Costume Designer               Natalie Whatley
Charge Artist                            Sarah Brown
Master Carpenter                         Zachary Kelty
Lead Carpenter                           Jonathan Williams
Welder                                    Cody Redding
Light Board Operator                     Christopher Eastland
Sound Board Operator                     Meredith Owens
Makeup                                    Caitlin Tray

Scenery
Maggie Adeleye, Stew Awalt, Matt Benton, Gabe Echeverri,
Ann K. Flynn, Chad Girndt, Michael Herbert, Courtney Hill,
Tyler Johnson, Jeff Palen, Nate Records, Rob Shelton,
Austin Terrell, Clay Wheeler

Costume
Stephanie Browning, Brandon Daughtry, Sarah Pais,
Natalie Whatley, Blair Womble

Electrics
Robert Bradley, Allie Hahn, Cody Redding, Lindsey Christian,
Matt Clark, Christopher Eastland, Trey Henry, Trey Jackson,
Tyler Johnson, Ryan Joynor, Mary Laws, Nic McMinn,
Meredith Owens, Amanda Sasser, Lisa Stucker,
Michael Summers, Lincoln Thompson,
Cynthia White, Amanda Wray

Publicity and House
Heather Hampton, Haley Phillips, Austin Terrell,
Laura Youngkin, Kemper Beard, Gabe Echeverri,
Michael Herbert, Kirstin Hodges, Zach Krohn,
Joey Melcher, Emmie Rothenbach, Jonathan Williams

This production uses the Contract Management Program of
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Marion Castleberry, Ph.D. (Director) is Associate Professor of Theatre and Director of Graduate Theatre Studies at Baylor University. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Theatre from Louisiana State University. Marion has worked professionally as an actor, director, dramaturg, and voice and movement coach in many productions including The Chase, Courtship, and Talking Pictures. In 2004, he directed the 50th anniversary production of The Traveling Lady for the Horton Foote American Playwrights Festival. Marion is scheduled to direct The Traveling Lady at Ensemble Studio Theatre in New York City and The Chase at Theatrical Outfit in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2006. This summer he taught play development at the Ensemble Studio Theatre's Lexington Center for the Arts in Lexington, New York. He will produce three of the new works developed in Lexington for EST’s 2005 OctoberFEST.

Sally Lynn Askins (Costume Designer) received her M.F.A. from Trinity University at the Dallas Theater Center. She also received an M.A. in Theatre and a B.F.A. in Studio Art from Stephen F. Austin University. She has designed costumes over 130 productions including Dallas Theater Center, Dallas Children's Theater, Theatre Three, DISD, The Arts Magnet High School, Flagstaff Festival for the Arts, and The St. Petersburg Ballet of Russia. Ms. Askins has taught at Northern Arizona University, Texas Tech and is currently Costume Design Professor at Baylor University.

Stew Awaits (Stage Manager) This is Stew's first show to Stage Manage for the American Actors Company. Stew has been seen working with Shakespeare Dallas for the last two summers as their Stage Manager. He has also stage managed several shows for Baylor University, including Flight, The Magic Flute, and Baylor's All-University Sing. Stew was recently invited to be an ensemble member with Second Thought Theatre with whom he has worked on several of their productions, including their upcoming production of Bertolt Brecht's The Caucasian Chalk Circle.

John Cleavelin (Lighting Designer) John holds a BFA in Design/Technical Production from the University of Texas. He has thirty years of production experience in a variety of areas. John has been lighting designer for the Lyric Opera of Waco. He has served as technical director for the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and Houston's Alley Theatre. John has television experience as set designer for Nickelodeon's Gullah Gullah Island, assistant to the production designer for the Mickey Mouse Club, and assistant art director for the Fox production the Newz. In addition to his experiences in opera, theatre and television, he has industrial experience as a project coordinator for Walt Disney World and Hasbro Toys, and technical director for scenery at FM Productions Florida.

David Dodson (Sound Co-Designer) has spent the past three years as a Sound Designer for the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. While there he designed Lobby Hero, Visiting Mr. Green, Equus, The Good Doctor, and A Lovely Sunday for Crewe Coeur. While at the DCPA he was afforded the opportunity to work with Frank Gorshin and Jamie Farr in the production of Say Goodnight Gracie. He also co-designed a Walden Family Playhouse production of Niles, a book by Louis Sachar. He is Technical Director of Waco Hall at Baylor University, hosting such events as Sing: the nation's longest running collegiate Broadway style competition, and talent such as Doc Severinsen and Dove Award winners Cademan's Call and Mercy Me. He also owns Lazarus Sound Design, a sound design and recording company.

Adam Redmer (Technical Director) holds an MFA in Design/Technology from the University of Arizona School of Theatre Arts and a BFA in Design from Sam Houston State University. Before coming to Baylor University as the Assistant Technical Director he worked as the Theatre Technical Coordinator at Pima College in Tucson, Arizona. Adam also spent two summers in Lenox, Massachusetts as the Technical Director for Shakespeare and Co.'s summer season. He is currently on staff in the Baylor Theatre Department as Assistant Technical Director.

Michael Schmalz (Production Manager) is celebrating his twenty-seventh year in the theatre, during which time he has extensively toured the US and Canada and worked in various productions in both LA and New York. It has been his privlege to work with such authors as Israel Horovitz and John Ford Noonan, such director as Edgar Lansbury and Bill Bushnell, such actors as Elizabeth Ashley, Joseph Bologna and Renee Taylor and such entertainers as Barry Manilow and Mitzi Gaynor among others. This his second year with Baylor department of Theatre Arts as Technical Director.

William T. Sherry (Scene Designer) has taught scene design at Baylor since 1978, where he is presently employed as a full professor. Before coming to Baylor he also taught at the University of Maryland, College Park and worked extensively as a professional designer. Mr. Sherry is also a skilled scenic painter and has studied with the famed Czech designer Josef Svoboda. Mr. Sherry earned both his BFA and MFA degree in Design from Oklahoma University.

DeAnna M. Toten Beard, Ph.D. (Dramaturg) is a faculty member at Baylor University where she teaches theatre history, dramatic literature, and dramaturgy. Dr. Toten Beard earned her MFA in dramaturgy from the State University of New York at Stony Brook and received the Ph.D. in theatre history, literature, and criticism from Indiana University. She is the author of "American Experimentalism, American Expressionism, and Early O'Neill" in the new Companion to Twentieth-Century American Drama and serves as Book Review Editor for Theatre Topics.
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Sally Lynn Askins, M.F.A., Costume Design
Marion Castleberry, Ph.D., Graduate Director; Directing
Bill G. Cook, M.F.A., Professor, Theatre Generalist
Lisa Denman, M.F.A., Acting
Horton Foote, Visiting Distinguished Dramatist
Joshua Gilliam, B.A., Adjunct Faculty
Melissa Johnson, M.A., Musical Theatre
Steven Pounders, M.F.A., Acting
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William T. Sherry, M.F.A., Scene Design
Meredith Sutton, B.F.A., Dance & Choreography
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