

on the verge THEATER

Aug. 21, 2004

Dear Editor:

On the Verge Theater, Burlington's newest theater company, is proud to announce our first production:

John Steinbeck's
"Of Mice and Men"

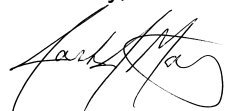
Enclosed please find:

- A press release with details about the production;
- Information about the cast and production team;
- A photo with caption; and
- A brief calendar listing

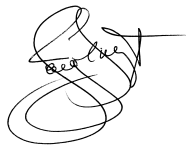
We'd appreciate any mention you could make of our production, and encourage you to send a reviewer to any performance. Please reserve your complimentary reviewer tickets by calling (802) 864-4501 or emailing josh@joshuajmasters.com.

If you'd like more information about our production, call Director Joshua J. Masters at (802) 864-4501 or Producer Jeremy Fraize at (802) 253-6861.

Sincerely,



Joshua J. Masters



Jeremy Fraize

Bringing theater to students and literature to life

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 21, 2004

CONTACT:

Joshua J. Masters, (802) 864-4501
Jeremy Fraize, (802) 253-6861

NEW THEATER COMPANY PRESENTS FIRST PRODUCTION: JOHN STEINBECK'S "OF MICE AND MEN"

BURLINGTON, VT—**On the Verge Theater**, a new Burlington theater company, will present its first production, John Steinbeck's "**Of Mice and Men**," in September. The play opens Sept. 10 for two shows at Johnson State College's Dibden Center for the Arts in Johnson, before moving to Burlington for three shows Sept. 24-25 at Champlain College's Alumni Auditorium.

"Of Mice and Men," adapted to the stage by Steinbeck from his 1937 novel, is one of the author's most celebrated works. It tells the story of two drifter farmhands in Northern California during the Great Depression of the late 1930s. George and his strong but childlike companion, Lennie, dream to buy their own farm and "live off the fat of the land." But when Lennie's penchant for soft and cuddly things results in tragedy, George's concept of love and protection of his friend is put to the test.

The play is produced by On the Verge co-founder **Jeremy Fraize** and directed by co-founder **Joshua J. Masters**. It features veteran Burlington-area actors **Craig Bailey** as George and **Tim Kavanagh** as Lennie. The balance of the diverse cast and crew is drawn from Chittenden, Lamoille and Washington counties.

Fraize and Masters are alumni of Johnson State College. They founded On the Verge as a vehicle to bring literary plays to students. "Drama is a wonderful tool that can help students embrace culture, history, the English language, and their own self-worth," says Masters. "We hope that 'Of Mice and Men' is the first production of many to help open young minds to great dramatic literature." Fraize adds, "When this ball started rolling, I was astounded by the dedication, talent, and heart of everyone who has participated."

"Of Mice and Men" will include matinees geared toward students, to be followed by discussions between the audience and the play's cast and crew. Matinees and evening performances are open to the public, though evening shows will not include post-performance discussions.

Dates, times and venues for "Of Mice and Men" are as follows:

Dibden Center for the Arts, Johnson State College, Johnson

Friday Sept. 10 10 a.m. *(Includes post-performance discussion with cast)*

Friday Sept. 10 7 p.m.

Alumni Auditorium, Champlain College, Burlington

Friday Sept. 24 8 p.m.

Saturday Sept. 25 2 p.m. *(Includes post-performance discussion with cast)*

Saturday Sept. 25 8 p.m.

Admission to both Johnson performances is **FREE**. Tickets for the Burlington shows are \$10 adults; \$5 seniors/students. They're available at the door. Discounts are available for student groups interested in attending any matinee. For more information, contact Director Joshua J. Masters at (802) 864-4501 or josh@joshuajmasters.com.

Schools interested in booking additional performances of the play should contact Producer Jeremy Fraize at (802) 253-6861.

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“Of Mice and Men” CAST



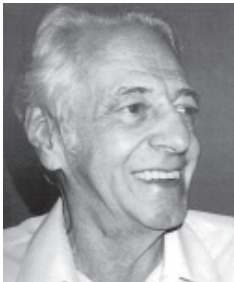
CRAIG BAILEY as George

Craig has appeared in more than 30 theater productions since he was 10, including a dozen leading roles with Burlington’s Theatre Factory from 1996 to 2000. After a four-year respite, he returned to the stage this May in “Picnic,” presented by the Shelburne Players. Craig won the first Burlington City Arts “Bessie” award for Outstanding Actor (“Black Comedy,” 1996). He hosts “Floydian Slip,” a Pink Floyd program, Sunday nights at 7 on Champ 101.3/102.1.



TIM KAVANAGH as Lennie

Starting in community theater, Tim is a well-seasoned professional whose career spans more than 20 years on both stage and screen. Credits include acting awards, professional voice overs, on-air host, writing and directing, his own production company and mention on “Entertainment Tonight.” Employed by WCAX-TV3 and a resident of Burlington, Tim’s favorite role is as father to “My Three Sons” and as husband to his wife, Sherry.



WILLIAM BENDER as Candy

A degree in music and a career as teacher, oboist, and folk singer led Bill to the stage. He has appeared at the Henry Hudson Theater in New York, at Chataqua with the Cleveland Playhouse, and with the Niagara Falls Opera Co. Recent local appearances include: Mr. Dussell in the Essex Players “Diary of Anne Frank”; a part in the film “Joe Sasquatch,” and as an actor and playwright at the Ethan Allen Homestead in Burlington. Of this production, he says, “What a privilege it is to act with this cast.”



THOMAS J. GOODRICH as The Boss

Tom hails from Northfield, Vermont. He has done more comedies than dramas, but loves the “heavies” (villains) — his favorite was Ross in “The Elephant Man.” “No, I’m not being type-cast as the Boss in this production,” says Tom, “but I enjoy the challenge. It’s more fun playing the ‘bad guy,’ rather than riding into the sunset with the girl.”

(Continued on back)

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JEREMY FRAIZE as Slim

Jeremy earned a BFA in Theater from Johnson State College in 1999. During his time at Johnson he appeared as Dracula in “Dracula,” Peter Van Dann, “Diary of Anne Frank”, Alfie Doolittle in “My Fair Lady”, and Danny Shapiro in “Sexual Perversity in Chicago.” This is his return to the stage after two years of independent wrestling. “On the Verge Theater was a dream I thought was not possible this soon,” he says. “When this ball started rolling, I was astounded by the dedication, talent, and heart of everyone. Here’s to a company that makes theater a sheer joy to be a part of again.”



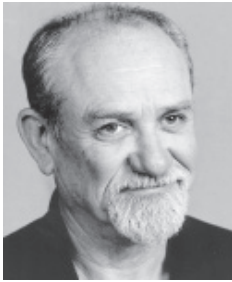
JACOB DEXTER as Curley

Jacob is excited to be returning to the stage after several years of working with young people. He has a degree in theater and has performed in productions such as “The Diary of Anne Frank,” “Camelot,” “Romeo and Juliet,” “The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes,” and the premiere reading of “The Hamlet: Or Why Not in Five Acts.” In his spare time Jacob is a writer of screenplays and short stories.



ANGI BAXTER as Curley’s Wife

Angi is a sophomore at the University of Vermont, working on her Bachelor of Arts in German. Like many of the cast members, she has been doing theater since she was young. She is extremely excited to be in this production as it is her first that is not affiliated with school. She is also delighted to be doing a production that strays from her true theatre obsession, Shakespeare.



BOB CARMODY as Carlson

Bob’s first adult on-stage work was as a newborn, (confused) baby girl in the Charlotte Town Player’s first-ever production: “Free to Be...,” and he has since appeared in three additional productions for the group. “It’s starting to be an annual tradition,” says Bob. He has also appeared on stage in “Our Town,” “The Odd Couple,” “Marrying Walt,” “A Thousand Clowns,” “Mother Courage and Her Children,” and in several acting class presentations at the Flynn Space. Bob is grateful to be involved with “Of Mice and Men,” and to be exploring various characters’ development.



SCOTT MYRICK as Whit

A graduate of Johnson State College, Scott boasts 25 years as a Vermont resident. He began his acting career in the sixth grade playing Tom Sawyer in “The Adventures of Huck and Tom.” He returned to theater his senior year of high school, during which he performed far too much Shakespeare. He later performed at JSC: Jack Palmer in “Boys Next Door,” David Moss in “Glengarry, Glen Ross,” Alan Strong in “Equus,” Edmund in “King Lear,” Preacher in “Rivers of Eldritch,” and Neville Landless in “Mystery of Edwin Drood”. Scott’s most memorable and enjoyable experience in theater is when he was slotted to play the Red Queen in “Alice in Wonderland.”



SHEILA COLLINS as Crooks

Born and raised in New York City, Sheila arrived in Vermont less than two years ago from Pasadena, Calif. (Folks always want to know why. Just ask her.) She enjoys acting, theater and Vermont summers. ‘Nough said. Since her arrival, Sheila has appeared in several local television commercials and has had the good fortune of working with a number of fine theater groups. She appeared as Young Lucy Parsons in Catalyst Theatre’s “Inquisitions,” written by Greg Guma; as Geneva Lee Brown in Lost Nation Theater’s “1940’s Radio Hour,” and most recently as Irene Molloy in QuarryWorks Theater’s “Hello, Dolly.” Sheila is happy to be working with On the Verge Theater and its premier production, “Of Mice and Men.”

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“Of Mice and Men” PRODUCTION TEAM

JEREMY FRAIZE — *Producer*

Jeremy is a co-founder of On the Verge. He earned a BFA in Theater from Johnson State College in 1999. During his time at Johnson he appeared as Dracula in “Dracula,” Peter Van Dann, “Diary of Anne Frank”, Alfie Doolittle in “My Fair Lady”, and Danny Shapiro in “Sexual Perversity in Chicago.” This is his return to the stage after two years of independent wrestling. “On the Verge Theater was a dream I thought was not possible this soon,” he says. “When this ball started rolling, I was astounded by the dedication, talent, and heart of everyone. Here’s to a company that makes theater a sheer joy to be a part of again.”

JOSHUA J. MASTERS— *Director*

Josh is a co-founder of On the Verge. He graduated from Johnson State College in 1996 with a degree in theater and made his directing debut in 1995 with “The Lion in Winter” for the Stowe Theater Guild. Since then, he has been working in the film industry as a producer, director, writer, and actor. He has appeared in such television films as “Killer Flood: The Day the Dam Broke” (Joe Lando, Bruce Boxleitner, Michele Greene), “Frozen Impact” (Ted McGinley, Stacy Keach, Linda Purl), and “Lightning: Fire From the Sky” (John Schneider, Stacy Keach, Chase Masterson). Josh also enjoys teaching the art of acting to young people, and has experience teaching drama to inner-city school children and currently teaches a therapeutic acting class through the Baird Center for Children and Families.

julie l. wilder— *Stage Manager*

A native Vermonter, julie lives in the woods with one husband, two cats, and two dogs. She works from her home as a writer, and as the editor of a small educational publication. “Of Mice and Men” marks julie’s return both to civilization and to theater — she is honored to be a part of On the Verge Theater’s first production. “Working as stage manager offers me the unique perspective of seeing each level of the show’s development,” says julie. “I love observing the process as it unfolds — from auditions, to casting, to rehearsals, and finally, the performance. It has been a privilege to watch this tremendously talented company bring Steinbeck’s characters to life.”

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CRAIG BAILEY (left) as “George” and **TIM KAVANAGH** as “Lennie”
in John Steinbeck’s “**OF MICE AND MEN,**” the first production from
ON THE VERGE THEATER. (Photo: Erik Goodrich)

High-resolution digital file available upon request

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CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT

John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men"

WHO

Presented by On the Verge Theater

WHERE/WHEN

Dibden Center for the Arts, Johnson State College, Johnson

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TICKETS

Admission to both Johnson performances is **FREE**.

Tickets to the Burlington shows are \$10 adults; \$5 students and seniors. Available at the door.

Discounts available for student groups attending matinees— call ahead.

MORE INFORMATION

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