

TBTA Membership

Membership is still only \$20.00 and is a great way to show support for the theatre. Join us today!

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Thank you to our 2013 Season Subscribers

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We apologize for any errors or omissions.

TBTA EXECUTIVE BOARD:

Michael Burnett, President & Artistic Director Meg Jones, Vice-President
Carol Hoose, Treasurer Kristin Hoose, Secretary

TBTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Kerry Bulson, Brian Casella (Technical Director), Sara Mariano, Andrew Okell, Lou Okell, Karen E. Steckler

The Brookfield Theatre for the Arts

presents



BE A GOOD LITTLE WIDOW

A FUNERAL

by **Bekah Brunstetter**

directed by **Matt Austin**

produced by **Andy Okell, Lou Okell and Karen E. Steckler**

CAST

Melody **Melanie Romano**
Craig **Chad Dutcher**
Hope **Kelly Mullins**
Brad **Matt Austin**
News Announcer **Tom Sheehan**
Caterer **Carol Martino**

There will be no intermission.

Running time is approximately 1 hour 20 minutes.

For the safety of the performers and the courtesy of fellow patrons, the taking of photos of any kind is strictly forbidden. Copyright laws prohibit the recording of sound and video. Please turn off **ALL** phones, pagers, computer games and other electronic devices as they can interfere with our technical systems. **Patrons who are unwilling to turn off electronic devices are welcome to leave the theatre and return to the box office for a refund.**

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Almost four years ago I went to see a friend in an Off-Off-Off Broadway show called *Fat Kids on Fire*. I support my friends in whatever they do, but I was hesitant. A show I had never heard of in a theater I had never heard of in a part of NYC I had never heard of. No matter what—I was there for support. The play was funny, heartwarming and just an overall great night at the theater. The playwright was Bekah Brunstetter. Her writing was a perfect combination of comedy and tragedy. I knew this was a name to keep an eye on, so I did. Whenever a production of one of her plays came around, no matter where it was, I went. She was beginning to make a name for herself in the NYC theater scene, with plays produced by The Atlantic and Roundabout Theatre companies. In the spring of 2011, Brunstetter was commissioned to write a play for Ars Nova Theater in NYC. That play was *Be a Good Little Widow*. It had a short off Broadway run starring Jill Eikenberry (*L.A. Law*).

I saw that show toward the end of its run and something about it just struck me. I couldn't stop thinking about it for weeks. I wasn't exactly sure what it was. The play was about a newly married young woman whose first experience with death comes with the loss of her husband and how she deals with the aftermath. None of what I described was anything I could connect with. I am not a young woman, I am not married and I have been to more funerals since age 10 than any person should probably have to deal with. There was just something. Then it struck me. The play is not about the specifics. It is about the loss of innocence, being forced into adulthood and learning how to cope with all of that. I am making the play sound very depressing, which it is not. Like I mentioned, Brunstetter manages to perfectly balance humor with sadness, which is what makes this play so wonderful. You will be laughing one second and crying the next.

I am so thrilled that TBTA has taken the chance and allowed me to direct this piece. I get to share a play I love so much with audiences who may not know it, but will love it. Four years ago *Fat Kids on Fire* was a play that I would not have found on my own accord or decided to go to if it were not for my friend being in it. I had a great time at the theater and discovered a new playwright. Hopefully this production of *Be a Good Little Widow* will do the same for TBTA audiences. Take a chance—see something you might not normally see. You'd be surprised at what you might find.

—Matt Austin

PRODUCTION CREW

DIRECTOR Matt Austin
PRODUCERS Andy Okell, Lou Okell, Karen E. Steckler
SET DESIGN Jay Austin, Andy Okell
LIGHTING DESIGN Stephen Cihanek
SOUND DESIGN Jay Austin
COSTUMES Meg Jones
STAGE MANAGER / PROPS MASTER Carol P. Martino
LIGHTING EXECUTION Nicola Gillotte
SOUND EXECUTION Courtney P. Tanner
SET CONSTRUCTION Bob Lane, Don Lombardo, Andy Okell
SET PAINTING Andy, Karen, Lou, Matt, Courtney
HOUSE MANAGER Nikki Shaner-Bradford
BOX OFFICE Carol Hoose
SRO/CONCESSIONS TBTA Board
OPENING NIGHT PARTY Kristin Hoose

SPECIAL THANKS

to Erik Leidal for literally giving us the shirt off his back.

I N O U R L O B B Y

The Women's Center of Greater Danbury

Vision: Our vision is to end the violence against women, men and children and to foster equality and empowerment for all.

Mission: Our mission is to serve the needs of individuals, families and the community with prevention, crisis intervention and support services with regard to domestic violence, sexual assault and other major life crises.

We achieve this mission through our strongly committed team of dedicated staff, direct service and board of director volunteers, and with the help of our many partners, from individuals and governments to local nonprofits and corporations. Together, they help us to sustain the provision of high quality, professional services for all who turn to us for help, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

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and crew for your commitment, heart and talent. Special thanks to best guy Andy!



Melanie Romano (MELODY) is a Prevention Educator at The Women's Center. She is a graduate of Providence College where she was a member of the school's all female a cappella group. She has been involved in local community theater since she was 8 years old. Previous credits include Mrs. Potts in *Beauty and The Beast* and Mother Abbess in *The Sound of Music*. She has been on stage at TBTA in *Pippin*, *Once On This Island*, and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Cabaret*.

Karen E. Steckler (PRODUCER) has lived in Brookfield for 8 years. An original New Yorker, worked for ABC-TV, News, Entertainment and Sports for 44 years—the winner of 4 Emmy's in the field of broadcasting. Karen has been privileged to be part of the team coverage of 6 Olympics including Munich and is also a recipient of the Alfred I. DuPont Columbia University Award in Broadcast Journalism for the live coverage of the death of Pope John Paul II and the election of Pope Benedict XVI. Karen is a new member of the TBTA Board of Directors.

Tom Sheehan (NEWS ANNOUNCER) is happy to lend his voice to this first show of the 2013 season. His long list of on-stage credits include *Cabaret*, *Master Class*, *Man of La Mancha* and *Love Letters* which he also directed. Tom also directed last season's *Moonlight & Magnolias*. He is looking forward to beginning work directing *Tuesdays With Morrie* which opens in September and he hopes to see you there!

Courtney P. Tanner (SOUND EXECUTION) is returning for her second season at TBTA. She is grateful to have been given this opportunity to work with an amazing group of individuals who made this journey an exceptional one. Courtney has worked on TBTA's productions of *Hair*, *Into The Woods*, and *Dead Man's Cell Phone*. A Danbury High School alumni, Courtney has worked on *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Urinetown*, and *Hairspray*. Courtney has also worked as the Lighting Designer for musicals at the middle school level for the Danbury School District. Courtney would like to thank her friends and family for all of their encouragement and support. Peace and Love.

EMERGENCY FIRE NOTICE

Please observe the **EXIT** sign nearest to the seat which you occupy. It is the shortest route to the exterior of the building. Should an emergency arise, theatre personnel will be available to assist your orderly departure.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bekah Brunstetter plays include *CUTIE AND BEAR* (Upcoming, The Roundabout) *A LONG AND HAPPY LIFE* (Upcoming, Naked Angels) *BE A GOOD LITTLE WIDOW* (ARS NOVA, Spring 2011; Collaboracion - Chicago) *HOUSE OF HOME* (Williamstown Theater Festival), *OOHRAH!* (Atlantic Theater, 2009; Steppenwolf Garage 2012), and *MISS LILLY GETS BONED* (Finborough Theater 2010, Lark Playwrights Week 2009, Finborough Theater, June 2010). She is a New York New Voices Fellow through the Lark Play Development Center, member of The Primary Stages Writer's Group, the Naked Radio writing team. She is an alumni of the Women's Project writer's Lab, the Ars Nova Play Group, and the Playwright's Realm. She was the Playwright in Residence at the Finborough Theater, London, 2010-2011. She is a 2 time Samuel French Short play festival winner, and 2 time winner of the New York Innovative Theater Award for Best New Play.

She is currently working on an EST Sloan commission, and writing for a new MTV series created by Craig Wright, *Underemployed*. She has recently joined the writing team for "Switched At Birth" on ABC Family.

More information at: <http://blog.bekahbrunstetter.com>

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Jay Austin (SET DESIGN / SOUND DESIGN) is happy to be returning to TBTA once again, having served as tech director here from 2005-2007. He also received the Volunteer of the Year award in 2004 (one of six volunteers of the year working on this production). TBTA credits include *The Food Chain*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Beyond Therapy* and *Bye Bye Birdie* (in which he also made his onstage debut). Most recently he was the sound designer for *The Book of Liz* also directed by his son Matt. Besides TBTA, Jay has worked with many theaters throughout the region including the Musicals at Richter, The Ridgefield Theater Barn and Crime & Merriment Productions.



Matt Austin (DIRECTOR / BRAD) is so grateful for the opportunity to direct *BAGLW* here at TBTA, having been a part of this theater for almost 12 years. This is his first venture into directing a drama, having directed only comedies before. Directing credits include *Prisoner of Second Avenue*, *Playwrighting 101* (*The Rooftop Lesson*), *For Whom the Southern Belle Tolls* and *The Book of Liz*. Acting credits include *Assassins*, *Outward Bound*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Moonlight and Magnolias*. He is a graduate of WCSU as well as The Upright Citizen's

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Brigade in NYC. He is the founder of, and currently performs with, The Brookfield Theatre for The Art's resident Improv troupe '17 Debacles'. He would like to thank everyone at TBTA for taking a chance on a new American play and to his family and friends who have had to put up with his sheer exhaustion over the past few months.

Stephen Cihanek (LIGHTING DESIGN) After studying theater and engineering in college, his interest in theater returned while attending the First Baptist Church in Brewster, NY where he took on the role of technical director and lighting/sound designer (and sometimes actor) for most of their productions. Since then he has designed lights for TBTA and other local theaters. Shows include *Little Red and the Hoods*, *Master Class*, *Outward Bound*, *Putting It Together*, *As Bees in Honey Drown*, *Dinner with Friends*, *Diviners*, *Harvey*, *Spelling Bee*, *The Book of Liz* and *Into The Woods* as well as sound design for *Thou Shalt Not Dance*. Steve is this TBTA's 2012 Volunteer of the Year (1 of 6 in this show).



Chad Dutcher (CRAIG) is returning to TBTA after performing in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. He is thrilled to have the opportunity to share the stage with such a talented cast. While not at home in Bridgewater, Chad manages and provides design service for Spruce Home & Garden in Westport. An eye for design and artistic expression is where he thrives. Chad thanks TBTA for providing another outlet for this creativity and thanks the cast and crew for their many talents and commitment. Most importantly, he thanks Matt for trusting and believing in him. "To all my family and friends watching—thank you for supporting me!"

Nicola Gilotte (LIGHTING EXECUTION) has done tech work on many shows at TBTA beginning with last year's *Thou Shalt Not Dance*. She is currently a student in Danbury.

Meg Jones (COSTUME DESIGN) is the Vice President of TBTA and runs the costume department. She has worked on many productions both on and off-stage. TBTA performances include *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, *Thou Shalt Not Dance*, *Sylvia*, *Carnival*, *The Odd Couple*, *Peter Pan*, *Spoon River Anthology*, *Pippin* and *The Laramie Project*. She was assistant director for last season's *Into The Woods* and has worked as producer and costume designer on many, many shows. She is a previous TBTA Volunteer of the Year (1 of 6 in this show). By day she teaches first grade and is the mother of two lovely daughters.

Bob Lane (SET BUILDER) has worked on nearly every set at TBTA beginning with *Pippin* in 2009, earning him the TBTA Volunteer of

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the Year award in 2010 (one of six in this production). He thanks the Jackson family for getting him involved at the theater, especially his wife, Rita, for putting up with his commitment to the many shows he has worked on at TBTA.

Don Lombardo (SET BUILDER) has caught the set building bug and has helped out on several set builds at TBTA. He and his wife, Karlene, are long-time TBTA supporters.

Carol P. Martino (STAGE MANAGER/CATERER) is excited to work with this stellar cast and crew for her eighth show at TBTA (Carol is the 2011 TBTA President's Award winner). Thanks to Matt, Lou, Andy and Karen for their continued trust in her work, and to the cast and crew for making the process so much fun! A special thanks to her husband, John, for his patience while she's off for play time at the theatre. *Taste the rainbow!*



Kelly Mullins (HOPE) is the Program Manager of Education and Community Outreach at the Women's Center and the Director/Creator of "Act Out", an interactive educational theatre troupe. She holds a degree in Communication and Theatre Arts. Her theater credits include *Merry Wives of Windsor* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Ives Concert Park, *The Letter Opener* at Thomaston Opera House, *Make Me A Match* at Clockwork Repertory, as well as several shows at The Warner Theater, Sherman Players, WCSU, and here at TBTA including *House of Blue Leaves* and *Exit The Body*.

Andy Okell (PRODUCER/SET) is on the Board of Directors and has produced several plays at TBTA including *The Book of Liz* and *Moonlight & Magnolias*. He has also built sets, with Bob the Builder, for many TBTA shows since 2010. By day, he manages Arketype, a graphics and printing company in New Milford. He is a previous Volunteer of the Year (1 of 6 in this show). Thank you to Matt for this opportunity, to co-producer and new friend Karen, to building buddies Bob and Don, and to the entire cast and crew for your talent and commitment.

Lou Okell (PRODUCER) is a previous Volunteer of the Year (1 of 6 in this show). Her producing credits include *Last of the Red Hot Lovers*, *...Spelling Bee*, *Sylvia*, *The Book of Liz*, *Moonlight & Magnolias*, and *Thou Shalt Not Dance*. She has also provided PR support for many other shows here at TBTA. By day, she produces projects together with Andy Okell at Arketype, their graphics and printing company in New Milford. Thank you to Matt for this opportunity, Meg for her sparkle, producing buddy Karen for being so fantastic, and to the entire cast