



Murder in the Cathedral

by *T.S. Eliot*

*a poetic play of grave beauty
and momentous decision*

FRI Nov 5 † 8 PM

SAT Nov 6 † 4 PM & 8 PM

THU Nov 11 † 8 PM

FRI Nov 12 † 8 PM

SAT Nov 13 † 4 PM & 8 PM

Discussing Murder: a conversation about
the play with the director and Rev. Molly Baskette.

Free. Sat Nov 6 † 6:30 PM

**First Congregational
Church of Somerville**

89 College Avenue

(4 blocks from Davis Square)



Director's Note

*Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.*
—T.S. Eliot in "Burnt Norton"

When *Murder in the Cathedral* was first staged at Canterbury in 1935, Conrad Aiken's review said that the play is "a turning point in English drama...the English language...becoming the stuff of drama, turning alive with its own natural poetry." In resurrecting the verse-drama that had not been popular with English audiences in centuries, Eliot re-focuses our attention on ageless issues and on the power that language can have to communicate not only information, but emotion and images.

At its heart, this is a play about balance. Balance between the spiritual and the secular, between the powerful and the powerless, between men and women, between pleasure and duty, between contentment and despair, between action and suffering. At the beginning of the play the Chorus are uneasy, uncertain, ignored and oppressed. As the play progresses we are introduced to the powerful forces trampling the small folk.

These are not unfamiliar forces. While few of us today expect the church to be the counterweight to the state's eternal quest to expand its power over our lives, we still seek balance. Crowds still gather at the scenes of power to make themselves known in their anonymity. And we give birth to new leaders, new celebrities, new saints and new martyrs, witnessing their rise and fall, judging their victories and defeats, and hoping that their transformations will transform us in turn. In this season of decision, as the wheel turns again, the poet reminds us that there are always wider perspectives in the patterns of time.

This is without a doubt the most challenging script I've directed to date, but also the most beautiful. It has been a great joy to share it with my cast and I am very excited to present it to you. I would like to thank my very talented cast, who have brought fantastic energy and imagination to this production; my astonishingly creative and tireless crew; the members of First Church for their encouragement and support; and our audience—you make it worth doing. Thank you all.

— Elizabeth Hunter

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

Staff

Producer	Beckie Hunter
Director.....	Elizabeth Hunter
Technical Director	Jo Guthrie
Assistant Technical Director	Jim Powers
Stage Manager.....	Chris DeKalb
Lighting Design.....	J. Michael Spencer
Sound Design, Webmaster.....	Neil Marsh
Board Operator.....	Matt Kimmel
Costume Designer.....	Elizabeth Ryan
Prop Manager.....	Debbie Steiner
Make-up Manager	Melody Moening
Publicity Director	Justin Graeber
Promotional Design	Gilly Rosenthol
House Manager.....	Sarah Bradford
Chorus Rehearsal Assistant.....	Michael Babish
Crew	Mink Myers

Theatre@First Executive Board

President.....	Beckie Hunter
Artistic Director.....	Elizabeth Hunter
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	Chris DeKalb
	Jo Guthrie
	Matt Kimmel
	Neil Marsh
	Jason Merrill
	John Olson
	Erika Reinfeld
	Gilly Rosenthol
	J. Michael Spencer

Special Thanks

Theatre@First thanks the following :

Rev. Molly Baskette and all the members of FCS

Our dedicated and tenacious team of volunteers, including various members of the cast and crew. Thank you for building our set, working the box office, selling our products, and generally making these shows happen.

Regis Donovan and Jim Paradis for their free wheeling

Rachel Mello for enlightening ideas

Dana Atterbury for his attentive measures

Brecky Beard for her clear cuts

Maitland Lederer for her spacious generosity

Mary Bennett, Kimberly Ardolino and Paulo Ruffino for their huge help with costumes

Megan Powers for all her help and making her older brother look good

Ushers, Box Office & Concessions

Martha Andrews	Kim Ardolino	Atissa Banuazizi
Peter Baskette	Leah Bateman	Renni Boy
Heidi Burbidge	Sarah Campbell	Heather Carson
Marie Dorcena	Becky Dowgiert	Bonnie Engelbart
Keith Ericson	Sara Folta	Dibbie Gilmore
Branden Grimmert	Joe Hardwick	Mike Hetu
Barbara Huber	Karen Jost	Marc LeFebvre
Vin Magazini	Gianna Maizilli	Betsy Mariere
Dennis Mariere	Jeff McHugh	Rachel Mello
Kate Melnyk	Merv Murphy	John “Beezy” Myers
Erika Reinfeld	Janet Riley	Adalberto Rivera-Vega
Janice Robillard	Nichole Robillard	Paulo Ruffino
Elizabeth Ryan	Melissa St. John	Michael Salazar
Brooke Schedneck	Nicholas Sheckman	William Starner
Nancy Tewksbury	Sarah Train	Laurel Traves
Jenny Utech	Latoya Wilson	Kimber Wood

We also thank our friends and family members in the audience. Without your support of the arts, we wouldn't be here.

Cast

MOLLY BASKETTE (Chorus) is the pastor of First Congregational Church. After lurking around and watching all the T@F fun from the sidelines through the last two productions, she finally decided she wanted a piece of the pie. She lives in Davis Square with an assortment of family, including her husband Peter (usher extraordinaire) and 2-year-old son Rafael. She invites y'all back to the sanctuary for Sunday morning worship (we *think* we can promise no more nefarious murders).

TED BEATIE (Third Tempter) is excited to make his acting debut with Theatre@First. When not running his own airline, Ted spends his days solving problems for a local software company. He fancies himself a photographer and a writer, especially when inspired by his love of travel, and would like nothing more than to be paid to do all three.

JOHN BOWKER (Fourth Knight) received his first acting job at sixteen as a six-foot tall Twinkie for local supermarket openings. John is pleased to be appearing in his first Theatre@First production after many years away from any form of traditional or snack-food related theatre.

KERRI CENTRELLA (Chorus) is pleased to be performing in her third Theatre@First production. She has previously been seen as Alfred in *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* and the Waitress in *All in The Timing*. Other favorite roles include her part in *The Compleat Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* and Cassius in *Julius Caesar*. She would like to thank Mare for being a fabulous chorus captain and to say to Alys "Yay, We're Women!"

FAATIN CHAUDHURY (Chorus) is very pleased to be doing theatre again, and so close to home too! She enjoyed being at one in voice and mind and body with the other nine lovely chorus ladies. She's previously played Hannah Jarvis in Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, and Lady Bracknell in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* in college. She insists on pronouncing "horror" as "haw-ror". Oh and flowers are all very well, but chocolates are chocolates. Many thanks and much love to every one of her Wellesley peeps who shows up. *waves madly*

KATIE DIMARCA (Chorus) is thrilled to be acting in T@F's *Murder in the Cathedral*. Although this is her first performance with T@F this is her second time portraying a poor woman of Canterbury in T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*. She has also acted in *Grease* (Frenchie), *Twelfth Night* (Duke Orsino), *The Heidi Chronicles* (Denise) and various one act plays.

ALYS EBENHOE (Chorus) This is Alys's first show with Theatre@ First. Previously, she belonged to Boston University's Wandering Minds theatre group, performing in such roles as the Gravedigger in *Hamlet*, Valentine/First Officer in *Twelfth Night*, Marshall Herrick in *The Crucible*, and Rosencrantz in *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*. She is thrilled to be a part of this production (and equally thrilled to be playing a woman for once). Thanks to C-4 (Kerri) for her auditionary encouragements!

MARE FREED (Chorus Captain) is a 3rd time offender with T@F, having previously committed male drag audacities in *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* and bewildered innocent theatergoers in *Philip Glass Buys a Loaf of Bread*. She has a dangerous history spotted with senseless acts of Shakespeare and an untreated musical theatre problem. She will soon be sent someplace quiet (Scotland) where she can get the help she needs.

JEFF GIBBS (Third Knight) was born in Lakeland, Florida and moved to Japan after college to work as an English teacher. While in Japan, he helped found the Urayasu Community English Theater and both wrote and acted in their productions. He moved to Boston 2 years ago.

PETER GILBERT (First Priest) is excited to return to the stage for the first time in 10 years. A devoted fan of National Public Radio, he is a musician and half of Somerville's newest sensation Shana's Mango. He enjoys teaching and writing music that is sometimes a bit strange.

LAUREN HALL (First Tempter) Recent Boston credits include *Invasion of Pleasure Valley!* (Queer Soup Theatre), *Roberto Zucco* and *Something Happens Perfectly* (Shadowboxing Theatre), *Quiet Torrential Sound* (Arlington Players), and *One Black Bird* (SouthCity Theatre). Lauren is thrilled that her first onstage experience with T.S. Eliot is utterly devoid of Jellicle Cats. Thanks, Elizabeth!

ARI HERZOG (Third Priest) is thrilled to join the Theatre@First family and is pleased six years of Hebrew School have finally paid off to play the role of a Catholic priest. His last production was four years ago playing Barry Klemper in *The Boys Next Door* with the Curtain Call Theater. An inveterate traveler and freelance writer, he lives in Boston and aspires to work in government.

JINEVRA HOWARD (Chorus) returns to the stage after a mysterious 15-year sabbatical for her first Theatre@First performance. She would like to thank Elizabeth for making the Auditions sign, the church for its space and for letting her help plant daffodils, and her fabulous boyfriend for living nearby and taking walks with her such that she saw the Auditions sign.

ALISSA LERMAN (Chorus) hails from Brighton, MA. This is her first production with T@F, and she's delighted to find herself in the company of such a warm and talented bunch. Her only regret is that they rejected her vision for *Murder* to be staged as commedia dell'Atre, with Becket as Pantelone. No matter. They'll love her next proposal: *Death of a Salesman* — the all-drag burlesque!

JASON MERRILL (Thomas) is delighted to be back for this, his third T@F production. Previously he was The Player in *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern are Dead* and Don in *The Universal Language* in *All in the Timing*. By day he plays an engineer at Red Hat.

ZACHARY TYLER NEWTON (Messenger) This is Zachary's first performance with Theatre@First and indeed his first performance since high school when last he was bitten by the theatre bug. Other current afflictions include political mania — his other extra-curricular activity being a campaign staffer.

ROB NOYES (Second Priest) has performed as a monk and a nun, so he is thrilled to add another religious figure to his collection. When not appearing in Theatre@First productions he busies himself by writing comic books and collecting pictures of animals in people clothing.

MICHAEL O'BRIEN (Second Tempter) Excited to perform in his first production with Theatre@First, this Boston University graduate visited Canterbury Cathedral while studying abroad. Michael appeared in *A Christmas Carol*, *42nd Street*, *Holly Jolly Follies*, and *Bye, Bye, Birdie* with The Mystic Players of Medford. An account manager at Thomson Financial, Michael enjoys balancing the corporate world with the artistic stage. He continues to cherish the support from his girlfriend, Rachel, family, and friends.

JOHN OLSON (Fourth Tempter) retired from the Theatre 20 years ago, but the temptation of this rôle was irresistible. His previous acting experience was with Theatre 80 in his hometown of Calgary, Alberta. Today, he works at ITA Software, managing a team of fiendishly clever software engineers; and he's a member of First Church Somerville.

DAVID POLICAR (Second Knight) dares to eat peaches, dances at the still point of the turning world, approves of a just subordination of the pretensions of the Church to the welfare of the State, and is more excited by a new excuse to quote Eliot than is entirely healthy. After abstaining from theatre for a third of a lifetime he is bemused to find himself treading the boards again, but delighted to do so with such exceptional company.

GILLY ROSENTHOL (Chorus/Promotional Design) returns to the Theatre@First stage after her “esmashing” performance as Ramon in *All in the Timing*. She would like to thank Spike the Cactus for his love and encouragement, and the chorus girls for making depressing poetry more fun than she ever imagined.

JUDE SHABRY (Chorus) is honored to be making her T@F performance debut, following her role as an usher for *All in the Timing*. Having previously only acted in a production of *The Vagina Monologues* at a yoga center, she is atoning for her heathen ways by appearing in an Anglican play about Catholics staged in a church. Rabbi Kass would be so proud.

J. MICHAEL SPENCER (First Knight/Lighting Designer) is adequately content to be a part of this show. He made his T@F premiere in *All in the Timing* and has been a fixture in the social and theatrical life of these wonderful people. Thank you to Elizabeth for the opportunity and to Kerri, Jim, Mjnk, Mare, Robotica, Gilly, Jo, Jason, Rob and all his other friends, new and old, for seeing him through this rehearsal process.

AUDITIONS

Be in Theatre@First's next show

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN

Auditions: January 18 & 19

Performances: April 8, 9, 15, 16 (tent.)

<http://www.TheatreAtFirst.org>

Staff

SARAH BRADFORD (House Manager) is now participating in her third production for Theatre @ First and has succeeded this time around in avoiding any strenuous work or long hours on the production itself and in doing so enjoyed the elusive task of “sleep” in the weeks preceding opening curtain, in between updating Excel spreadsheets.

CHRIS DEKALB (Stage Manager) During the day Chris is an Outsource Manager for Books24x7.com, but in his free time he enjoys working with the Theatre@First people in various crew positions. This is Chris’s third production with the group. He is also the editor for the Cambridge Movie News (www.cambridgemovies.com).

JUSTIN GRAEBER (Publicity Director)

JO GUTHRIE (Technical Director) Found wandering on the shores of the Thames, Jo was adopted by our Director and brought home to her native soil in a random string of events which led her to her current role as Technical Director. What she lacks in experience, she makes up for in enthusiasm and willingness to laugh in the face of adversity, snicker in the face of fear and beg for donations from anyone she encounters to make this show happen. If you haven’t donated time, information or products to Theatre at First, she just hasn’t gotten to you... yet. But she looks forward to meeting you.

BECKIE HUNTER (Producer) is a founder of Theatre@First and a member of First Church. She played Hot Lips Houlihan in *M*A*S*H* in high school, but is using what she learned on the first two T@F shows to make *Murder* happen. She greatly appreciates everyone who helped make her theater dreams come true.

Discussing Murder

A conversation about the play with Director Elizabeth Hunter and Rev. Molly Baskette, minister of First Church.

free Saturday, November 6, 6:30pm
(following the matinee)

ELIZABETH HUNTER (Director) is a founding member and the Artistic Director of Theatre@First. A veteran of several guerilla theatre companies, her previous directorial efforts include *A Little Night Music*; *Night, Mother*; *Kennedy's Children*; *The Zoo Story*; *No Exit* and *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead*, the inaugural production of Theatre@First.

MATT KIMMEL (Light Board Operator) is very happy to be working on his second show with the wonderful people of Theatre@First (the first being this summer's *All in the Timing*). Before moving to the Boston area a year ago, Matt worked with a variety of theatre groups in Western Massachusetts, designing, directing, stage managing, and whatever else they'd let him do. His next theatrical endeavor will be directing T@F's production of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* in the spring of 2005. In what passes for "real life", Matt works for a computer game company deep in the heart of the 128 belt.

NEIL MARSH (Sound Design, Webmaster) majored in Broadcasting at Ball State University in Muncie, IN and was a recipient of that school's David Letterman Scholarship. He has an unhealthy fascination with Canadian radio drama and is currently developing a live audio theatre project for Theatre@First.

MELODY MOENING (Make-up Manager) Trading in her previous uniform of spangled bodysuits for something more appropriate, Melody gave up her career as a dancer and circus performer to move from Florida to Massachusetts. She now is a makeup artist for Benefit Cosmetics and is forced to suppress her natural urge to use glitter and fake lashes on a daily basis. Melody loves her job, and freelances throughout Boston, but sometimes misses the elephants terribly.

MINK MYERS (Crew) was seduced by T@F this past July. After attending several of the social events, she decided that she should try to do something useful (aside from organizing pizza ordering and standing around looking pretty) and volunteered for the slave labor that is crew. Since then, she has been scurrying around (like a mink) doing her best to contribute, despite never having done anything that didn't involve being ON the stage. Thanks go to Spence for convincing me to show up to *All in the Timing*, Jimmy for the Jim & Mink show (and music), Kerri for being a darling (and the use of her parking permit), Babish for rides and movie nights and everyone else as well for making me feel like I actually belong somewhere, for the second time in my entire life. I love you all so much.

JIM POWERS (Asst. Technical Director) Jim is honored to be doing odd jobs and calling it being the “assistant tech director”. Jim’s previous theatre experience includes 3 1/2 years in an “unofficially official” technical capacity for with Boston University’s Wandering Minds theatre group despite attending Northeastern. Jim would like to everyone in T@F, Kerri C., Jo, and his family.

ELIZABETH RYAN (Costume Designer) has been sewing since she earned her Girl Scout badge when she was about 11 or so. After college she assisted her roommate costuming various shows at Yale and science fiction convention masquerades. She is a lapsed member of the Sick Pups, the New York/New Jersey costumers guild, Connecticut Auxiliary Branch. She owns more thread and fabric than she can count.

DEBBIE STEINER (Prop Manager) This is the first time in Debbie’s varied theater career to be asked to write a bio about herself for the program. As she is much more comfortable behind the stage then on it, Debbie is so flustered that she doesn’t know what to say... another first, most would agree.

THE FIRST ANNUAL FIRST CHURCH PIE FESTIVAL!

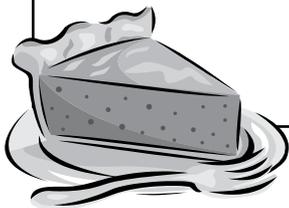
Saturday, November 20th, 10 am – 3 pm

More than a bake sale, this is a Pie Extravaganza!

Admission is \$3 at the door to sample 5 pies and vote for best pie.

Other activities for the day will include

- “Pie the Pastor”
- the explanation of mathematical Pi
- Pie Making Demonstrations
- “Pie in the Sky” – an historical tour of the church



BAKE! EAT! GIVE!

About Theatre@First

Theatre@First is Somerville's newest community theatre project, sponsored by the First Congregational Church of Somerville. We fill an important niche in the vibrant Davis Square arts scene, drawing upon the talents and contributions of individuals and organizations throughout the community to provide a venue for thought-provoking and entertaining performing arts for all those who love to be on either side of the curtain.

T@F welcomes your support. As a new community theatre program, our growth depends largely on the patronage of our audience members. Become a T@F member today and your donation will help ensure future productions. Support the arts in your local community! Be one of the "First."

T@F is a non-profit organization sponsored by the First Congregational Church of Somerville. All donations are tax-deductible and held in a fund dedicated to Theatre@First. All contributors receive a membership card and will have their name listed in our programs unless they prefer to remain anonymous. These are the five levels of membership T@F offers:

MEMBER (\$25): 1 free ticket to every production for 1 year, 1 free item at the snack bar when you present your membership card

FRIEND (\$50): 2 free tickets to each production for 1 year, 2 free items at the snack bar when you present your membership card

PATRON (\$100): 4 free tickets to each production for 1 year, premium seating, 4 free items at the snack bar when you present your membership card

ANGEL (\$500): 10 free tickets to each production in 2004, premium seating center stage in the first 2 rows, 10 free items at the snack bar when you present your membership card, program autographed by the leads

SPONSOR (over \$500): All the benefits of being an Angel, plus free ad space in the program (please make special arrangements with the Producer)

If you wish to pay by check, please make it out to First Congregational Church of Somerville, and mail it to:

Beckie Hunter
Theatre@First
170 Gore St. #504
Cambridge, MA 02141

Please include your email address (if you have one) and phone number.

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Theatre@First Shop

Visit the Theatre@First souvenir shop at
<http://www.cafepress.com/theatreatfirst>
to buy T@F shirts, hats, and other fine goods, as
well as t-shirts from some of our previous shows.

A Brief Biography of Thomas Becket

Thomas, who preferred to be called “Thomas of London,” was born in 1118. He was well educated in England and France and became a protege of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury. He went on to earn the favor of Henry II, who became King of England in 1154 following a period of civil war and anarchy. Henry made Thomas his Chancellor that year and Thomas excelled in that position, strengthening Henry’s rule in England while Henry concentrated on his French possessions. From contemporary reports we know that Thomas was intelligent and highly competent mentally and physically—he once defeated a French knight in single combat—and he became the king’s friend and chief advisor.

In 1162, Henry arranged for Thomas to become Archbishop of Canterbury—the head of the English church—hoping to thus unite the secular and religious hierarchies within his realm. Thomas was ordained as a priest one day and archbishop the next, but despite his late arrival to the clergy, he took his new position very seriously. Thomas surprised Henry by resigning as Chancellor and resisting Henry’s attempts to curb the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts. As the rift between them deepened, Henry punished Thomas for his perceived disloyalty by stripping him of lands and privileges and drumming up charges of embezzlement against him. Thomas fled to France in 1163 and spent seven years there under the protection of the pious King of France, Louis VII, and Pope Alexander III, also in exile in France.

After a series of difficult meetings, Henry agreed that Thomas could return to England, but refused to give him the Kiss of Peace which might have guaranteed his safety there. Upon Thomas’ return to England, he excommunicated several bishops who had supported the king, and rumors began to circulate that he was building up an army and committing other treasonous acts. Thomas was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral on December 29, 1170, by a party of knights. While it is unclear whether or not Henry meant to order Thomas’ death (the famous phrase “Who will rid me of this meddlesome priest?” was an invention of the playwright, Jean Anouilh) he was certainly perceived at the time to have been behind it and did penance for his part in the murder in 1174, making a pilgrimage to Canterbury, where he was publicly whipped.

Thomas was declared a saint in 1184. His shrine became the most popular in England and the tradition of pilgrimages to it formed the backstory for Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*. The shrine was sacked under the reign of Henry VIII and his remains were hidden at that time and never re-discovered.

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Rev. Molly Baskette, Pastor

