

# Seiler shines with dynamic energy in 'The Rehearsal'

Oct. 14, 2009 9:55 PM

A A

Written by  
Charles Culbertson  
footlights and spotlights

FILED UNDER

ENTERTAINMENT  
Go! Magazine - Theater

**Picture, if you will, a** 17th century playwright who has all the joie de vivre of a Mel Brooks and the mind-numbing inadequacies of an Ed Wood. Dismissively sweeping his hand, he banishes most dramatic elements, including plot, characterization, words, emotions, clarity and credibility, with a single throw-away phrase — "and all that." He then barrels ahead, flawed in his thinking but never for a moment in doubt of his own abilities.

He is, if you will, a legend in his own mind.

Now, imagine a person like this writing, producing and directing a play, and giving it an airing to two tongue-in-cheek theater goers. You will have the basic premise of "The Rehearsal," now playing at the Blackfriars Playhouse. First performed in 1671, this forerunner to modern plays such as "Noises Off" was written by four men — George Villiers, Samuel Butler, Thomas Sprat and Martin Clifford — and is now enjoying its first serious treatment since the 17th century.

The plot is simple. Ned Johnson and Frank Smith chance upon a "revolutionary" playwright, Bayes, and ask him to explain

the meaning of his last play. Bayes can't remember his last play, but he does know the one he's working on now and invites Johnson and Smith to view its rehearsal. For the next two hours, they are assaulted with a play that is — all at once — inane, insane, bombastic, majestic, inexplicable, disjointed, avant garde, heroic, silly and, at all times, incomprehensible.

And standing there amidst it all, able to explain every idiosyncrasy and always in a heaving, adoring effervescence over his own creation, is playwright Bayes. He positively beams upon the dramatic Frankenstein he is about to foist upon an unsuspecting world, taking some eagle-eyed potshots at theater critics and similar lowlife ne'er-do-wells along the way.

Christopher Seiler as Bayes gives perhaps the most energetic performance I have ever seen at the Blackfriars Playhouse, and I

2015 HomeFinder.com  
SWEEPSTAKES

You Can Win Your  
**Dream Remodel**

\$200,000 in Total Prizes

**ENTER NOW**

NO PURCH. NEC. Homeowners only. Ends 6/30/15.  
Rules homefinder.com/sweeps-rules

ADVERTISEMENT  
AdChoices

If You Go!

**what:** "The Rehearsal"

**when:** Through Nov. 28

**where:** Blackfriars Playhouse, Staunton

**cost:** \$10 to \$38

**info:** 851-1733 or

[www.americanshakespearecenter.com](http://www.americanshakespearecenter.com)

ADVERTISEMENT

Sponsored Links



**Odd Trick Fights Diabetes**

"Unique" Proven Method To Control Blood Sugar In 3 Weeks. Watch Video.  
Smart-Consumer-Lifestyles.com



**Looking to save money?**

Switch early & save up to 10% with the Allstate Early Signing Discount  
Allstate.com



**Myrtle Beach Summer Deals**

Discounted rates, free nights, attractions deals & more. Save now!  
[www.VisitMyrtleBeach.com](http://www.VisitMyrtleBeach.com)

ADVERTISEMENT

have seen plenty of them. He roars about for two solid hours, shouting orders, extracting performances at the top of his lungs and his emotions, exuding confidence and never, ever flagging in his determination to give the world "the new way of writing."

**E-mail Go! columnist Charles Culbertson at [mail@stauntonhistory.com](mailto:mail@stauntonhistory.com).**

## ARCHIVES

View the last seven days

[Yesterday, Jun. 16](#)

[Monday, Jun. 15](#)

[Sunday, Jun. 14](#)

[Saturday, Jun. 13](#)

[Friday, Jun. 12](#)

[Thursday, Jun. 11](#)

[Wednesday, Jun. 10](#)

See our paid archives for news older than a week.

## MOBILE APPS

Get The News Leader on the go.

Use our iPhone and Android apps to keep updated with what's going on in the Staunton area.

Learn more or download:

[IPHONE](#) | [ANDROID](#)

## SUBSCRIBE!



sign up for home delivery today

WED 17 THU 18 FRI 19 SAT 20 SUN 21 MON 22

### Stories and more

Augusta County Library Churchville, VA

### Stories, Status, & Patriotism

University of Richmond, Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature Richmond, VA

### Preschool Storytime

Staunton Public Library Staunton, Virginia

[MORE EVENTS](#) | [SUBMIT AN EVENT](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

[Site Map](#) | [Back to Top](#)

[SPORTS](#)

[LIFESTYLES](#)

[IN DEPTH](#)

[OPINIONS](#)

[OBITUARIES](#)

[FOLLOW US](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Mobile](#)

[RSS](#)

[E-mail Alerts](#)

[News](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Cars for Sale](#) | [Homes for Sale](#) | [Apartments for Rent](#) | [Shopping](#)

# GANNETT

Copyright © 2015 archive.newsleader.com. All rights reserved.

Users of this site agree to the [Terms of Service](#), [Privacy Notice/Your California Privacy Rights](#), and [Ad Choices](#)