

# Jeanne Button

Jeanne Button is a professor emerita, Tulane University department of theatre and dance, and acclaimed, award-winning costume designer who has designed costumes for hundreds of plays working on Broadway, Off Broadway, and for regional theatre, ballet, and opera. She also served on the faculty of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and the Yale University School of Drama.

Shows she's designed for include, *The Twilight of the Gods* (1993); *Broadway* (1987); *Arsenic and Old Lace* (1986); *The Dresser* (1981); *Home* (1980); *Wings* (1979); *King Richard III* (1979); *The Robber Bridegroom* (1977; 1975); *King Henry V* (1969); *The Watering Place* (1969); *The Freaking Out of Stephanie Blake* (1967);

Off Broadway credits include: *The Crucible* / Union Square Theatre ; *Macbeth* / Joseph Papp Public Theater / Martinson Hall; *Twelfth Night or What You Will* / Delacorte Theatre; *In a Pig's Valise* / McGinn-Cazale Theatre (1989); *Second Avenue Rag* / Marymount Manhattan Theatre; *Wings* / Joseph Papp Public Theater / Newman Theater; *Mother Courage and Her Children* / American Place Theatre; *The Family, Parts 1 and 2* / Westside Theatre (Upstairs); *Charlie Was Here and Now He's Gone* / Eastside Playhouse ; *The Carpenters* / American Place Theatre ; *Sensations* / Theatre Four; *World War 2 1/2* / Martinique Theatre ; *Get Thee to Canterbury* / Sheridan Square Playhouse ; *Kongi's Harvest* / St. Mark's Playhouse ; *The Four Seasons* / Theatre Four; *The Bench* / Gramercy Arts Theatre ; *The Niggerlovers* / Orpheum Theatre; and *MacBird!* / Village Gate (Upstairs) for which she was the 1967 winner of the HEWES DESIGN AWARD for costume design.

She also designed for *The Importance of Being Earnest* (date?); *1776* (1991); *Looking-Glass* (1982); *Tea* (1975); *The Cherry Orchard* (1963), and for *Huck Finn*, an opera by Hall Overton and Judah Stampfer, at Juilliard American Opera Center (1971).

In regional theater, she designed costumes for the 1967 Yale Swimming Pool production of Burt Shevelove's adaptation of Aristophanes's *The Frogs* (the cast included then-unknowns Larry Blyden, Christopher Durang, Meryl Streep, and Sigourney Weaver).

For Houston's Alley Theatre she has designed costumes for *A Flea in her Ear*, 2001; *Travesties*, 1999; *Hay Fever*, *As Bee's in Honey Drown*, and *Equus*.

She spent three years of her semi-retirement designing costumes for the *Houston Ballet's premiere of Peter Pan*, choreographed by Trey McIntyre.

For television she designed costumes for *La Bohème* (1988/II) and *Rappaccini's Daughter* (1980), and for film, *I Was a Teenage TV Terrorist* (1985).

In 1992, when she was the Tulane theatre department's costume designer, Jeanne was part of a faculty committee created to assess Tulane's Center Stage's future. With her on the committee were Ron Gural, now department of theatre chairman; Bruce "Buzz" Podewell, then associate professor of theater and dance and Paul Schierhorn, then associate professor of theater and dance. The consensus of the group was to point the program in a different direction. They looked back, toward Shakespeare. "There wasn't a Shakespeare festival in Louisiana at the time," says Gural. "But we also had an artistic interest in Shakespeare. So it wasn't just a financial decision--we all love Shakespeare and wanted to do Shakespeare as much as we could." Once the decision was made to try Shakespeare, the nascent festival put on its first season the very next summer, in 1993, staging two productions--*Much Ado About Nothing* and *King Lear*.