



THE ALLEY THEATRE | 2021-2022 SEASON

Synopses & Character Lists

GENERAL AUDITIONS • Saturday & Sunday, October 9th & 10th • 2:00pm-5:00pm

All actors should prepare both a DRAMATIC and COMIC monologue, along with 16 measures of music (if auditioning for *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*) that shows range, volume, and tone of the voice.

Video Auditions are acceptable • send to thealleytheatremail@gmail.com by 5:00pm 10.10.21

NOVEMBER 11, 12, 13, 14, 2021

OUR TOWN by Thornton Wilder

Directed by Kevin Weston

A landmark in American drama, Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize-winning Our Town tells the story of a small town, Grover's Corners, New Hampshire, in order to tell us the story of every town, the whole world over. Narrated by the "Stage Manager", we follow the Gibbs and Webb families, residents of Grover's Corners, through twelve years of life changes -- from the mundane in Act I, "Daily Life," to the romantic in Act II, "Love and Marriage," to the devastating in Act III, "Death and Eternity." Through the young lovers Emily and George, their strong and loving parents, and the many other Grover's Corners' locals, Wilder delivers universal truths about what it means to be human. "Oh, earth," Emily Webb exclaims towards the play's end, "you're too wonderful for anyone to realize you." With humor, wit, and exceptionally powerful storytelling, Our Town offers a unique opportunity for audience members to make precisely that realization.

CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

Stage Manager | *The host of the play and the dramatic equivalent of an omniscient narrator. The "Stage Manager" exercises control over the action of the play, cueing the other characters, interrupting their scenes with his own interjections, and informing the audience of events and objects that we cannot see. Although referred to only as "Stage Manager" and not by a name, he occasionally assumes other roles, such as an old woman, a druggist, and a minister. Interacting with both the world of the audience and the world of the play's characters, he occupies a godlike position of authority.*

George Gibbs | *Dr. and Mrs. Gibbs's son. A decent, upstanding young man, George is a high school baseball star who plans to attend the State Agricultural School after high school. His courtship of Emily Webb and eventual marriage to her is central to the play's limited narrative action. Wilder uses George and Emily's relationship to ponder the questions of love and marriage in general.*

Emily Webb | *Mr. and Mrs. Webb's daughter and Wally's older sister. Emily is George's schoolmate and next-door neighbor, then his fiancée, and later his wife. She is an excellent student and a conscientious daughter. After dying in childbirth, Emily joins the group of dead souls in the local cemetery and attempts to return to the world of the living. Her realization that human life is precious because it is fleeting is perhaps the central message of the play.*

Dr. Gibbs | *George's father and the town doctor. Dr. Gibbs is also a Civil War expert. His delivery of twins just before the play opens establishes the themes of birth, life, and daily activity. He and his family are neighbors to the Webbs.*

Mrs. Gibbs | George's mother and Dr. Gibbs's wife. Mrs. Gibbs's desire to visit Paris—a wish that is never fulfilled—suggests the importance of seizing the opportunities life presents, rather than waiting for things to happen. At the same time, Mrs. Gibbs's wish for the luxurious trip ultimately proves unnecessary in her quest to appreciate life.

Mr. Webb | Emily's father and the publisher and editor of the Grover's Corners Sentinel. Mr. Webb's report to the audience in Act I is both informative and interactive, as his question-and-answer session draws the audience physically into the action of the play.

Mrs. Webb | Emily's mother and Mr. Webb's wife. At first a no-nonsense woman who does not cry on the morning of her daughter's marriage, Mrs. Webb later shows her innocent and caring nature, worrying during the wedding that she has not taught her daughter enough about marriage.

Mrs. Soames | A gossip woman who sings in the choir along with Mrs. Webb and Mrs. Gibbs. Mrs. Soames appears in the group of dead souls in Act III. One of the few townspeople we meet outside of the Webb and Gibbs families, Mrs. Soames offers a sense of the interrelated nature of the lives of the citizens of Grover's Corners.

Simon Stimson | The choirmaster, whose alcoholism and undisclosed "troubles" have been the subject of gossip in Grover's Corners for quite some time. Wilder uses Mr. Stimson's misfortunes to explore the limitations of small town life. Mr. Stimson appears in the group of dead souls in Act III, having committed suicide by hanging himself in his attic. He is perhaps most notable for his short speech in Act III, when he says that human existence is nothing but "[i]gnorance and blindness."

Rebecca Gibbs | George's younger sister. Rebecca's role is minor, but she does have one very significant scene with her brother. Her remarks in Act I—about the location of Grover's Corners in the universe—articulate an important theme in the play: if the town is a microcosm, representative of the broader human community and the shared human experience, then this human experience of Grover's Corners lies at the center of a grand structure and is therefore eternal.

Wally Webb | Emily's younger brother. Wally is a minor figure, but he turns up in Act III among the group of dead souls. Wally dies young, the result of a burst appendix on a Boy Scout trip. His untimely death underscores the brief and fleeting nature of life.

Howie Newsome | The local milkman. Howie's reappearance during every morning scene—once each in Acts I, II, and III—highlights the continuity of life in Grover's Corners and in the general human experience.

Joe Crowell, Jr. | The paperboy. Joe's routine of delivering papers to the same people each morning emphasizes the sameness of daily life in Grover's Corners. We see this sameness continue when Joe's younger brother, Si, takes over the route for him. Despite this sameness, however, each of the conversations Joe has while on his route is unique, suggesting that while his activities are monotonous, daily life is not.

Si Crowell | Joe's younger brother, also a paperboy. Si's assumption of his brother's former job contributes to the sense of constancy that characterizes Grover's Corners throughout the play.

Professor Willard | A professor at the State University who gives the audience a report on Grover's Corners. Professor Willard appears once and then disappears. His role in the play is to interact with the audience and to inform theatergoers of the specifics of life in Grover's Corners. His reference to Native Americans reflects Wilder's understanding that the European ancestors of the current population in Grover's Corners replaced and extinguished the existing Native American populations.

Constable Warren | A local policeman. Constable Warren keeps a watchful eye over the community. His personal knowledge of and favor with the town's citizens bespeaks the close-knit nature of the town.

Sam Craig | Emily Webb's cousin, who has left Grover's Corners to travel west, but returns for her funeral in Act III. Though originally from the town, Sam has the air of an outsider. His unawareness of the events that have occurred in Grover's Corners during his absence parallels the audience's own unawareness.

Joe Stoddard | The town undertaker. Joe prepares Emily's grave and remarks on how sad it is to bury young people. This statement emphasizes a theme that grows ever more apparent throughout the play and receives its most explicit discussion in Act III: the transience of human life.

DECEMBER 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 2021

A CHRISTMAS CAROL by Rick Vale (adapted from Charles Dickens)

Directed by Rick Vale

This play with music, adapted by Rick Vale, is based on "A Christmas Carol. In Prose. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas", commonly known as the novella, "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens. First published in 1843, the story recounts the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, an elderly miser who is visited by the ghost of his former business partner Jacob Marley and the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come. These visits are recounted in the story, eventually turning his heart from stone to a heart of Christmas.

Mr. Vale's adaptation takes place entirely in the office of Charles Dickens with a limited cast playing multiple roles, using set pieces and props found in the office, to tell the story. The show contains original music by Rick Vale. This score is the source of the Sandi Patty Christmas standard, "Star of Bethlehem."

CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

ACTOR 1 | Male, playing the role of CHARLES DICKENS (the storyteller who remains himself throughout the play. He does step into the story at certain points, portraying the smaller roles of: the Charity Solicitor #1, The Fiddler, Joe, Fred's Guest #3, and Gentleman #1

ACTOR 2 | Male playing the continual role throughout of EBENEZER SCROOGE

ACTOR 3 | Male, portraying the roles of BOB CRATCHIT, FEZZIWIG, and FRED'S GUEST #5

ACTOR 4 | Male, portraying THE GHOSTS OF: MARLEY, CHRISTMAS PAST, and CHRISTMAS PRESENT

ACTOR 5 | Male, portraying the roles of FRED and THE UNDERTAKER

ACTOR 6 | Young Male, portraying the roles of YOUNG EBENEZER, FRED'S GUEST #6, and YOUNG MARRIED MAN

ACTOR 7 | Young Male, portraying the roles of YOUNG MARLEY, and GENTLEMAN #2

ACTOR 8 | Male child, portraying the roles of TIM CRATCHIT, BOY WITH A SLEIGH, URCHIN #1

ACTOR 9 | Male older child, portraying the roles of BOY EBENEZER, MR. WILKINS, PETER CRATCHIT, and URCHIN #3

ACTOR 10 | Female, portraying the roles of CHARITY SOLICITOR #2, BELLE, and ABIGAIL

ACTOR 11 | Female, portraying the roles of MRS. CRATCHIT, MRS. FEZZIWIG, and FRED'S GUEST #4

ACTOR 12 | Young Female, portraying the roles of FLORA, THE LAUNDRESS, YOUNG MARRIED WOMAN, and FRED'S GUEST #1

ACTOR 13 | Young Female, portraying the roles of MARTHA CRATCHIT, THE CHARWOMAN, and FRED'S GUEST #2

ACTOR 14 | Female child, portraying the roles of BELINDA CRATCHIT, FAN, and URCHIN #2

ACTOR 15 | Young Female, portraying the roles of LUCY CRATCHIT, and URCHIN #4

ACTOR 16 | Young Female, portraying the roles of A MAID, and FAUNA

ACTOR 17 | Female, portraying the role of A MAID

JANUARY 20, 21, 22, 23, 2022

THE ELEPHANT MAN by Bernard Pomerance

Directed by Andrew Persinger

The script is based upon the life of Joseph Merrick, a man so physically deformed that he became known as the "Elephant Man." With very few options open to him, Merrick (whose first name is John in Pomerance's play) is forced to display himself to the public in travelling sideshows. Eventually, however, he finds himself alone and destitute in London. Due to the kindness of one Dr. Frederick Treves, Merrick is soon admitted into the London Hospital for care and observation. Treves becomes determined to help Merrick lead a normal life, and Merrick soon becomes the toast of society. In the end however, John Merrick finds that normality isn't something he can achieve, or that he even necessarily wants.

CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

DR. FREDERICK TREVES | *Treves has just been hired by the London Hospital to give lectures on anatomy. He has purchased a house, has a wife who loves him, and will have "100 guineas before he's forty." As he states, "I, Freddie Treves, have excessive blessings. Or so it seems to me." Treves originally befriends John Merrick, the Elephant Man, solely out of medical interest. He wishes to examine and analyze him.*

As Merrick stays on at the hospital however, he soon becomes more a friend than a patient to Treves. Merrick begins to lead a seemingly "normal" life, and Treves realizes that "normality" is actually often full of hypocrisy. Meeting John Merrick fundamentally changes Treves outlook on life, and what it means to be human.

The actor portraying Frederick Treves needs to be analytical and intelligent, but at the same time, deeply vulnerable, as Treves outlook on life and humanity changes completely by the end of the play. Frequently doubles as the Belgian Policeman.

JOHN MERRICK | *"In an autobiographical note which appeared on the reverse side of his freak show pamphlet, Merrick noted that his deformity first manifested with small bumps appearing on the left side of his body." By the time he was twelve, his mother had died, and Merrick's deformities were severe. His stepmother soon expelled him from his home. After being kicked out of a workhouse where he was abused and beaten, he could get no other work or employment, so Merrick was forced to sell himself as a circus freak; people paid to come and see the frightening and gruesome Elephant Man. Underneath the terrible-looking surface, John Merrick was a gentle, kind, and intelligent man.*

When a doctor, Frederick Treves takes Merrick into the London Hospital, he is introduced to society. Merrick desperately wants to be normal, and does everything he can to mirror the upper-class friends he is making. However, as time goes, Merrick begins to question the very normality that he is seeking to emulate. The actor must determine the conclusions Merrick comes to.

**Typically, the actor playing this role physically creates the deformities. No makeup or prosthetics are applied.*

MRS. KENDALL | A well-known actress, Mrs. Kendal is kind, witty, intelligent, forthright, and exceedingly pleasant. She is asked by the doctor Frederick Treves to come and meet with John Merrick. She agrees, and Merrick and Mrs. Kendal soon become very close. She sees past his deformed body and appreciates his soul and mind for their beauty and intelligence. Mrs. Kendal sees such value in Merrick that she makes it her task to introduce him to the best of society, so that they can appreciate him, and he can have a somewhat normal life. Frequently doubles as Pinhead / Countess.

CARR GOMM | The administrator of the London Hospital, Carr Gomm is a bit wordy at times, but he is also blunt, forthright, and kind. When Merrick finds himself destitute in London, Frederick Treves, a doctor at the hospital, takes him in. However, it is Gomm that writes a letter to the Times about Merrick, which results in donations pouring in for him. So many donations are made as a result of Gomm's letter that Merrick can be supported for life without a penny spent from Hospital funds. Gomm is, at heart, a good businessman who is extremely logical and runs the hospital well. Frequently doubles as the Conductor.

ROSS | The manager of John Merrick. He is loud, dishonest, and an all-around unlikeable man. He exploits Merrick by displaying him to the public as a freak of nature, and then steals Merrick's portion of the money that he gave to Ross for safekeeping. Ross is a lower, working class man who finds himself in utterly desperate straights as he gets older. In the end he has nothing, and no one to turn to. Frequently doubles as Bishop Walsham How / Snork.

BELGIAN POLICEMAN | This policeman forcefully drives John Merrick and his manager, Ross, out of Belgium, by refusing to give them a permit to display Merrick as a circus freak, and then deliberately beating Merrick. Frequently doubles as Frederick Treves.

CONDUCTOR | The conductor of a boat train. When Merrick is forced by his manager Ross back to England, this conductor coerces Merrick onto the train. The conductor is told that Merrick is an imbecile, and he believes it, choosing to engage with Merrick only on a surface level. The conductor does, however, protect Merrick from the mob that tries to "rip him to pieces" when he arrives in London. He also is the one that goes to find a doctor for Merrick. Frequently doubles as Carr Gomm.

SNORK | A low class, ignorant porter who recently started working at the London Hospital, Snork can't resist trying to get a glimpse of John Merrick when an older porter encourages it. The two are caught, and the other porter is fired. Snork, while delivering a meal, is the one finds Merrick dead. Frequently doubles as Ross and Bishop Walsham.

NURSE SANDWICH | An experienced nurse, she is interviewed to take care of John Merrick. She has "cared for lepers in the East... In Africa [she saw] dreadful scourges quite unknown to more civilized climes." She is also religious and parades that in front of others. Frequently doubles as Pinhead / Princess Alexandra / Duchess.

PRINCESS ALEXANDRA | Princess Alexandra becomes acquainted with John Merrick. She gives him a signed photograph of herself for Christmas. It is up to the actor to determine how sincere her friendship is. Frequently doubles as Pinhead / Nurse Sandwich, Duchess.

THE DUCHESS | The Duchess visits Merrick and gives him her ring as a sign of friendship. It is up to the actor to decide how sincere her friendship is. Frequently doubles as Pinhead / Nurse Sandwich / Princess Alexandra.

PINHEAD #2 | One of three women freaks whose heads are pointed. Her intelligence is limited. Frequently doubles as Mrs. Kendal / Countess.

THE COUNTESS | The countess visits John Merrick and gives him a gift of silver-backed brushes and combs for Christmas. It is up to the actor to decide how sincere her friendship is. Frequently doubles as Mrs. Kendal / Pinhead.

PINHEAD MANAGER | The manager of three circus freaks known as pinheads, because their heads are pointed. He is cruel to them and threatens the three women to get them to do what he wants. Frequently doubles as English Policeman / Porter / Lord John.

A POLICEMAN | A policeman. When John Merrick arrives back in England from Belgium, this policeman helps the conductor get Merrick from the train to a safe space. However, once they arrive there, the policeman cruelly makes fun of Merrick. Frequently doubles as Pinhead Manager / Porter / Lord John.

WILL – A PORTER | Will is an ignorant, low class porter who has worked at the London Hospital for a while. He cannot resist showing off a glimpse of John Merrick to Snork, a new porter. The two are caught and Will is fired, as he was warned he would be. This makes him rather desperate, as he has a sick wife and kids to take care of. When his pleas for pity go unheeded, he leaves an extremely unhappy man. Frequently doubles as Pinhead Manager / English Policeman / Lord John.

LORD JOHN | Lord John is an unreliable businessman who convinces Dr. Frederick Treves to invest the money for John Merrick into a scheme; Lord John eventually loses said money. He is oily, slick, and deceitful, but nonetheless puts up a good front. Lord John becomes an acquaintance of Merrick and gives him a silver-topped walking stick as a gift. It is up to the actor to determine how sincere the friendship actually is. Frequently doubles as Pinhead Manager / English Policeman / Porter.

BISHOP WALSHAM HOW | Bishop Walsham comes to visit John Merrick to talk about religion with him. The Bishop seems kind and invested in Merrick (he does volunteer to come and visit him weekly), but under the surface is a bit self-serving and close-minded - especially when it comes to his beliefs. In his mind, his viewpoints are the only ones that can be correct. He is easily baited by Gomm, the administrator of the London Hospital, and goes off on a long and heated discourse about religion versus science. Frequently doubles as Ross / Snork.

PINHEAD #1 | One of three women freaks whose heads are pointed. Her intelligence is limited. She makes an appearance is made in a dream in which the Elephant Man and Dr. Frederick Treves' roles are reversed. In the dream she is an angry commentator. Frequently doubles as Nurse Sandwich / Princess Alexandra / Duchess.

PINHEAD #3 | One of three women freaks whose heads are pointed. Her intelligence is limited. Frequently doubles as Mrs. Kendal / Countess.

CAST MEMBERS WILL ALSO PLAY VARIOUS Barkers, Crowd, Announcer, and Orderlies

FEBRUARY 17, 18, 19, 20, 2022

ON GOLDEN POND by Ernest Thompson

Directed by Sharon Zimmer

"ON GOLDEN POND" is a classic American comedic drama that's every bit as touching, warm, and witty today as when it debuted off Broadway in 1978. Retired couple Ethel and Norman Thayer are spending their 48th summer at their vacation home on Golden Pond, in the woods of Maine. Their delightful summer routine--fishing, picking strawberries, enjoying old mementoes, listening to the loons call--is given a bitterly comedic edge by Norman's unreliable memory and cantankerously morbid statements. When their daughter Chelsea visits for Norman's 80th birthday, bringing her boyfriend Bill and Bill's teenage son, Billy Jr., the whole family must come to grips with Norman and Chelsea's mutual bitterness, while Norman blossoms with his chance to mentor young Billy. The turbulent relationship between father and daughter, the generation gap between young and old, and the difficulties of a couple in the twilight years of a long marriage, all combine in a play that effortlessly illustrates the hilarious, heartbreaking, human moments of which life is made.

CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

NORMAN THAYER, JR. | Reads as 80-ish. Norman Thayer is a husband and father, a retired man approaching his 80th birthday. Norman is described as "grand, he has a manner, a way of speaking and of carrying himself that seem to belong in another era." This larger-than-life quality, with a natural intelligence and the retention of his youthful "pep and vigor" make him a formidable figure. Though his health is generally good, he suffers from occasional heart palpitations and is "flirting with senility" -- this can cause distress when he walks into the middle of the woods and fails to recognize the path, but it also allows him to take advantage of his age and delicate status, upon occasion, to use his sharp sense of humor on family and friends, using subtle mockery under the guise of an "innocent old man."

Norman is cantankerous, curmudgeonly, and crotchety, with a sharp and scornful word for his nearest and dearest, and a habit of expressing cranky ethnicity-prejudice which is in keeping with his era. When their daughter Chelsea visits Golden Pond for the first time in 8 years to celebrate her father's 80th birthday, and to introduce her boyfriend Bill, Norman gets the opportunity to repair his troubled relationship with his daughter, who found him cold and critical as a child, and has in turn neglected her parents as an adult. He also finds himself rejuvenated by his connection with Billy Ray, Jr., Bill's 13-year-old son, who stays with the Thayers while Bill and Chelsea vacation in Europe. Through his mentorship of kindred spirit Billy, with whom he shares a recognizes a quick sense of humor and sharp observational skill, Norman regains energy and happiness as he spends hours fishing, shares his favorite books, tells stories of the old days, and incorporates shocking slang into his vocabulary.

ETHEL THAYER | Reads as 69. Ethel Thayer is an energetic and exuberant woman, a wife and mother. Ethel is warm, loving, bright, and active. Sociable and kind, with a sharp and breezy sense of humor, she is described as "filling the empty spaces when Norman goes quiet", and in their exceptionally strong marriage -- they are described as the best of friends with a keen understanding of each other --, often plays the role of tactful, social mediator between Norman and the rest of the world. Ethel's glass-half-full optimism causes her to see the world differently, referring to herself and her husband as middle-aged, while her husband insists that they are elderly, and she tries to understand or enjoy people on their own terms, where Norman, if only for the purpose of humor, will judge and censure. She loves to observe nature and considers herself friends with the loons which inhabit the lake. Ethel's health is good, and her chief burdens are emotional, as she encounters Norman's moments of faulty memory and cardiac difficulty.

CHARLIE MARTIN | Reads as 44. Charlie Martin the mailman is a native of rural Maine and has lived for his entire life near the body of water known as Golden Pond. He's been working in the postal service since his teens, a family business he inherited from his uncle. Charlie is friendly, chatty, and cheerful, given to "laughing at anything". His catch phrase: "Holy Mackinoly!" Charlie is described as round, weather-beaten, and smiling. Some crankier personalities judge him as not too bright, or "deficient", due to his constant cheer and undiscerning sense of humor, but he has a good head on his shoulders, and is very charming in a "rustic, simple, thoughtful way." A hard worker and a good neighbor, Charlie watches over the summertime inhabitants of Golden Pond, many of them couples his parents age or older, passing news along with the mail.

BILL RAY | Reads as 45. Bill Ray is a man from California, a successful dentist, who travels with his son, Billy, and his girlfriend, Chelsea, to rural Maine, in order to meet Chelsea's parents at their summer home on the shores of Golden Pond. Described as an attractive and well-dressed man who "works at being an intellectual, and is a bit cautious in life", he feels a bit out of place on Golden Pond, constantly worrying about bears, and just a bit alarmed at the idea of skinny dipping in the lake. Bill presents as sincere and fairly serious, although he "has a sense of humor when he remembers to use it." He is a happy, confident man, proud of his thriving dental practice, and radiant in his relationship with Chelsea, which he describes as "a very kinetic relationship. Very positive."

BILLY RAY | Reads as 13. Billy Ray Jr. is a boy from California, newly a teenager, who travels to rural Maine with his father, Bill, and his father's girlfriend, Chelsea, to meet Chelsea's parents, Norman and Ethel Thayer, at their lakeshore summer home. Described as short for his age, as "flippant -- but only to cover his awkwardness", he is eager and bright. He has a veneer of teenage cool and talks a big game about his main California pastime -- "cruising chicks" -- but his slangy vocabulary of mildly foul curse words is used with innocent enthusiasm, and with a positive and sociable personality. Billy develops an immediate connection with 80-year-old Norman, as each recognizes a kindred spirit in their sense of humor and their sharp observational skills. Billy's sense of responsibility and care for Norman are direct results of the happiness and sense of empowerment he experiences at Golden Pond.

CHELSEY THAYER WAYNE | Reads 42-ish. Chelsea Thayer Wayne is an East Coast transplant living happily in California, who travels with her boyfriend, Bill Ray, and his son Billy, to her parents' summer home on Golden Pond, to celebrate her father Norman's 80th birthday and to introduce Bill to her parents. Chelsea is described as pretty, tan and athletic, "a nervous type, something dark about her, but she has her father's humor." Childhood struggles with her body image have left their mark, and whatever her actual size at age 42, a stray comment from her father can reduce her to a "fat little girl" again. Chelsea enjoys a close and loving bond with her "mommy", Ethel, but her relationship with her father Norman -- whom she calls "Norman" -- is rocky. Her memories of his distant and highly critical parenting style have driven her to the opposite coast, and keep her from visiting her parents more often than every eight years or so. A confident, successful career woman, Chelsea feels reduced to an insecure child at Golden Pond, where she feels like she's been "answering to Norman all my life." She constantly struggles to understand her father's cold treatment, and carries the grudge with intensity and vocal bitterness, which angers Ethel, who is a sympathizer but not an ally in Chelsea's war with Norman.

MARCH 10, 11, 12, 13, 2022

TWELFTH NIGHT by William Shakespeare

Directed by Ronn Johnston

Often lauded as one of the most structurally perfect comedies ever written and beloved by audiences for generations, "TWELFTH NIGHT; OR WHAT YOU WILL" is a masterpiece. Shipwrecked on the shores of the strange land, Illyria, Viola believes herself alone in the world and her twin brother drowned. Disguising herself as a boy to work in the court of Illyria's Count Orsino, Viola discovers her male disguise has proven all too effective: Orsino sends her as a go-between in his persistent love-suit to the unresponsive Olivia. Even as Viola sues for Olivia's love on Orsino's behalf, Viola falls in love with Orsino herself. What ensues is a cross-dressing comedy rife with pain and triumph, humor and madness, transformation and redemption.

CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

VIOLA | Early 20s- mid 30s. Should be able to convincingly look like a young man (called "boy" by Orsino) when costumed. Viola is beloved by all who encounter her, enabling those around her to reconnect with the vibrancy of life. She is brave, clever, quick-thinking, and deep feeling. She is a creative thinker, and when she is washed up on shore in a place she's never been, thinking she is all alone in the world, she still has the presence of mind and the courage to disguise herself and find a position as Orsino's servant. Ultimately, Viola falls passionately in love with Duke Orsino.

ORSINO | Late 20s-50s. Should be a peer in age range to Olivia. A powerful duke, Orsino has been brought to his knees by his passionate love for Lady Olivia. Love has made Orsino "fancy-sick," and he spends his days listening to music and lounging in beds of flowers. It is implied that at some point he and his men fought against Antonio. He is hopelessly in love with Olivia and strongly enamored of the idea of love and the chivalric code associated with it. This has caused him to be deeply melancholic. Something about Orsino is attractive to Viola – whether it's his melancholy that betrays him as a deep thinker, his handsome good looks, his mercurial nature (he at one point threatens to kill Viola, all of a sudden, and she is willing to die), or the depth of his feeling all depends on the production.

OLIVIA | Late 20s-50s. Should be a peer in age range to Orsino. A wealthy and willful countess, Olivia is in mourning for the deaths of her father, and her brother (who died shortly after him.) She insists that she will cry every day for seven years and abjure the company of suitors in order to mourn her brother's recent death. All of this changes when she meets Cesario, and she blames fate for bringing a gentleman into her life that she desires so greatly that she abandons her mourning entirely.

MALVOLIO | Olivia's steward. Pompous, self-important, and harboring great ambitions for himself. When Maria plays a trick that convinces him the Lady Olivia is in love with him, his self-regard is such that Malvolio is ready to believe it. He dreams of being Count Malvolio and goes to the most ridiculous lengths possible to adhere to the love letter presumably written by his lady. Even when everyone treats him like he is crazy, Malvolio clings to his belief in Olivia's love and insists that he is being grossly abused. An actor playing Malvolio must be able to believe wholly in his circumstances, while taking the epic levels of Malvolio's joy in being loved by Olivia and attempts to please her to the level of the absurd and the grotesque. Even when trapped in a dark chamber and told the chamber is light, Malvolio doggedly clings to his belief that the chamber is in fact dark and that he is not mad. When Malvolio is finally released from prison, he swears to be "revenged on the whole pack."

SIR TOBY BELCH | Lady Olivia's uncle, Sir Toby Belch, fritters away most of his days and nights with drinking. He does not seem to have any money himself, so he lives on the generosity of his niece and drinks away her suitor Sir Andrew's fortune. Sir Toby loves to cause a bit of trouble, and often takes pleasure in having fun at other's expense. Still, there is a tenderness in the way Sir Toby speaks of his niece and in the way he acts with Andrew and Maria – sometimes. Toby is insistent that it would be best for Olivia to stop her gratuitous mourning – though it is clear that part of this desire is self-interested: no one is supposed to party during a mourning period. He hopes to arrange a match between Olivia and Andrew Aguecheek to secure his extravagant lifestyle for posterity.

SEBASTIAN | The same age as Viola. When Viola is dressed as a boy, they look identical. Sebastian is quicker to fight than his sister, and more skilled at doing so. He is immediately taken by Olivia's beauty, and happily consents to marry this woman whom he has never met. Sebastian is someone who is easy to love – he is beloved by his sister Viola, by a sea captain who rescued him and now is willing to follow him to the ends of the earth, and by the Lady Olivia who finds him so lovable that even when she realizes he's not Cesario, the "man" she intended to marry, she wants to be with him.

ANTONIO | A sea captain who some think of as a pirate. He's dangerous enough that Sebastian asks him whether he killed a bunch of people, but it seems like he did not. Nonetheless, he has many enemies in Illyria. Antonio saved Sebastian from the shipwreck and loves him so much that he is willing to risk his life by coming to Illyria in order to accompany Sebastian on his journey. He lends Sebastian his purse without being asked, and when he thinks Sebastian is in trouble, he is willing to risk capture or loss of life to save him.

FESTE | Feste is a professional fool, who has served the Lady Olivia's household for some time – but as Olivia is in mourning, his foolery is no longer welcome. As such, Feste also seems to be freelancing at the Duke Orsino's these days. Under the guise of foolery, Feste is often able to speak truth to those in power who would otherwise refuse to hear it. He wants desperately for Olivia to leave off her mourning. Feste is also the most musical of Shakespeare's fools. He is intuitive, deep feeling, and despite his professional duty to make everyone laugh, smacks of his own melancholy and knowledge of mortality.

MARIA | Olivia's serving woman/lady-in-waiting. Her exact status oscillates, depending on the production. Maria schemes up and executes an extremely elaborate plan of revenge on Malvolio. She is constantly trying to reign in the reckless debauchery of Sir Toby and Sir Andrew, but she also joins in the fun. Ultimately, she marries Sir Toby.

SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK | Sir Andrew is ostensibly staying at Olivia's court in attempt to get Olivia to marry him – but he spends the majority of his time drinking with his buddy, Sir Toby. Sir Andrew is a dreadfully silly man, a coward, and a simpleton. He is proud of his ability to execute a high kick (whether he actually is an amazing gymnast or whether he has a distorted perception of his abilities and actually cannot caper at all is up to the discretion of the director.)

FABIAN | A servant of Olivia's, who periodically joins in Sir Toby and Sir Andrew's fun.

CURIO | A servant to Orsino. Curio tries to get the duke to go hunting, but Orsino responds that he only wants to hunt after Olivia's heart.

VALENTINE | A servant to Orsino, Valentine tries to carry the duke's suit to Olivia, but is denied entry. He is the one who tells Orsino that Olivia has sworn off men for a seven-year mourning period.

SEA CAPTAIN / PRIEST / SERVANT / SAILORS / OFFICERS / MUSICIANS / ATTENDANTS

JUNE 10, 11, 12, 2022 | THE ALLEY IN THE PARK

THE MOUSETRAP by Agatha Christie

Directed by Zarah Shejule

A timeless tale of "whodunit," Agatha Christie's "THE MOUSETRAP" strands seven strangers at Monkswell Manor during a blizzard. But a police sergeant unexpectedly arrives, worried that a murderer-at-large is among the guests of the Manor. Before he can investigate, one of the guests is killed, starting an investigation into the lives and histories of everyone there. One of them is the killer, and another one of them may be next. Will the police be able to solve the case before another "mouse" falls? The world's longest continuously running play for over 60 years, only closing in 2020 because of COVID, "THE MOUSETRAP" continues to delight and intrigue mystery lovers of all ages.

CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

CHRISTOPHER WREN | Christopher Wren is the first guest to arrive at Monkswell Manor, the establishment owned by Giles and Mollie Ralston. He is a young man in his early twenties, described as having long, disheveled hair and eccentric ties. Christopher is quickly enamoured with Monkswell Manor, exploring all rooms and furniture. He actively flirts with Mollie, much to Giles' frustration, and then takes on the task of helping Mollie cook meals. Because of his eccentric nature, he is an immediate suspect in the mysterious murders connected to Longridge Farm.

MOLLIE RALSTON | Mollie Ralston is the young wife of Giles Ralston, and the proprietor of Monkswell Manor. Despite knowing very little about the bed-and-breakfast business, she eagerly jumps into both the business management and the household tasks of cooking and cleaning. Mollie is not as naive as she initially seems, especially when dealing with difficult guest Mrs. Boyle or handling the oddball guest Christopher Wren. However, Mollie does have a mysterious past - revealed in connections with the murders of Longridge farm.

GILES RALSTON | Giles Ralston is Mollie's attentive and sometimes over-protective husband, managing Monkswell Manor alongside of her. While Mollie attends to more of the household tasks, Giles works along the outside of their bed-and-breakfast establishment, chopping wood, chucking coal, and taking care of the hens. He is immediately suspicious of the young stranger Christopher Wren, and argues against leaving Mollie alone with him. However, some of his actions arouse suspicion against him and what possible connections he could have with tragic events at Longridge Farm.

MRS. BOYLE | A former court magistrate, Mrs. Boyle is a pompous, pretentious woman who immediately presents herself as unlikeable and unsympathetic. She is quickly critical of Mollie and her ability to manage Monkswell Manor and is in fact critical of the house itself. The younger guests - especially Miss Casewell and Christopher Wren - set out to antagonize her with great success. However, Mrs. Boyle is killed at the end of Act One, a result of her connection to the tragedies of Longridge Farm.

MAJOR METCALF | Major Metcalf is a jovial and sporting man, retired from the army and always willing to lend a hand. Little else is known about him, but in his interactions, he generally tries to raise the spirits of those around them: he sees shoveling snow as good exercise and compliments the simple breakfast in spite of a fellow guest's complaints. Like the other guests of Monkswell Manor, he holds a surprising secret to his identity.

MR. PARAVICINI | Mr. Paravicini is the mysterious and unexpected guest at Monkswell Manor, the last to arrive when his car overturns in a snow drift. He reveals very little about who he is or where he is from, instead enjoying his strange sense of mystery and putting others ill at ease.

SERGEANT TROTTER | Sergeant Trotter arrives at snowed-in Monkswell Manor on skis, eager to find a person of interest connected with a murder in London the previous night. He also believes that a potential murder victim could be at Monkswell Manor, someone linked to the tragic Longridge Farm case of years past. He is abrasive and manipulative in his questioning, bordering on eccentric and myopic in his mission.

MISS LESLIE CASEWELL | Described as "manly," Miss Leslie Casewell arrives as an aloof guest at Monkswell Manor. She does not reveal much about her past, but in a conversation with proprietor Mollie Ralston, Miss Casewell advises ignoring psychiatrists and turning a back to the past. She is not afraid to manipulate people to get what she wants, but soon finds herself in a situation too overwhelming to manage.

AUGUST 5, 6, 7, 2022 | THE ALLEY IN THE PARK

THE TEMPEST by William Shakespeare

Directed by Rick Vale

For twelve years, Prospero, the exiled Duke of Milan, has been living on a remote, uninhabited Mediterranean Island with only his daughter, Miranda (a young girl who has grown up seeing no other human being but her father), Caliban (the son of the island's former ruler, a witch named Sycorax), and Ariel (an "airy spirit" who has served as Prospero's servant). Prospero has learned the magical arts through deep meditative study and uses his supernatural powers to exert his authority and influence events. At the play's beginning, he causes a tempest to overtake the surrounding waters, shipwrecking the enemies responsible for his exile. The boat's passengers are scattered, and the state of the island is thrown into chaos as murder plots, drunken foolery, and love-at-first-sight become the order of the day. But by the end, Prospero has righted the chaos and resolved all conflict, and asks the audience's indulgence to set him free.

CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

PROSPERO/PROSPERA* | Prospero is the former Duke of Milan who was banished by his usurping brother Antonio and the King of Naples twelve years prior to the start of the play, and found refuge on a far off, uninhabited Island in the Mediterranean Sea. He is a magician, having learned the magical arts through years and years of intense study. Throughout the show, he uses his powers to influence events and exert his will. He is father to Miranda, and master to Ariel (a spirit) and Caliban (an island monster). Prospero's arc in the play is from a bitter, aged monarch seeking revenge to a gentler, forgiving ruler who values "virtue" before "vengeance" (V.i).

**Note: In some productions, Prospero is cast as a woman and renamed Prospera.*

MIRANDA | Miranda is the young, naive, open-hearted fourteen-year-old daughter of Prospero who has been living on the island since she was two years old, and since that time has never seen another human being. Miranda enters the play incredibly distraught at the tempest her father has wrought and the boat that is about to be wrecked as a result of it. She seems to demonstrate a heightened lack of empathy that her father lacks: "O I have suffered / With those that I saw suffer!" (I.ii). she says. When Ferdinand (the shipwrecked Prince of Naples) enters the scene, he and Miranda fall in love instantaneously, and she spends the remainder of the play entrenched in the newness of this relationship, finally telling Ferdinand: "I am your wife, if you will have me; / If not, I'll die your maid" (III.i). Despite her innocence and her father's strict and powerful hold upon her, Miranda demonstrates several moments of strength, willfulness and independence.

CALIBAN | A treacherous and vicious island native, Caliban is the son of the late Sycorax, a witch who formerly ruled the island. He was begot, according to Prospero, through a union between Sycorax and the devil. Described as a "monster" and a "demi-devil," Caliban serves as servant to Prospero but, unlike Ariel, is unwillingly subjugated. He frequently reminds Prospero that the ownership rights to the island are his, and Prospero, in turn, frequently reminds Caliban that he was once treated well and that Prospero took him under his wing and taught him to speak, until he tried to rape Prospero's daughter Miranda. Despite his coarseness, Caliban delivers some of the most beautiful poetry in the play, usually in his descriptions of the island that he calls home. This role is wonderful for a character actor with a great physical facility.

ALONSO | Alonso, King of Naples, was (along with Antonio, Prospero's brother) responsible for Prospero's exile from Milan twelve years prior. Despite this, we learn early on that Alonso may be a man who is more easily influenced by those around him (read: Antonio) than he is intentionally conniving. Evidence of Alonso's naivete comes from the fact that he continues to associate with the conspiratorial Antonio and Sebastian, who plot to kill him in his sleep. Evidence of his well-intentioned nature and capacity for deep feelings comes first when we witness his sorrow at fearing he has lost his son, Ferdinand, to the roaring waters that shipwrecked their vessel, and then at his remorse when he sees what fate he has left Prospero and Miranda to. A misguided but well-meaning monarch, Alonso reconciles with Prospero at the play's end and restores his dukedom, before being reunited joyfully with his son Ferdinand.

ANTONIO | Antonio is Prospero's conspiratorial younger brother who, with the King of Naples' help, usurped Prospero's dukedom and exiled him from Milan. Antonio and Sebastian (the King of Naples' brother and a fellow shipwrecked passenger) are near mirror images of one another: both are younger brothers to more politically powerful men, and both are easily classified as amoral megalomaniacs, more interested in their own political advancement than anything else.

FERDINAND | Ferdinand is the young male lead and Miranda's romantic counterpart. Son of Alonso, the King of Naples, and heir to the throne, Ferdinand is taken for dead by his father when he is lost at sea after the shipwreck. He has merely been led to another part of the island, however, where he comes upon Miranda and falls in love with her at first sight. He is put to the test by Prospero (Miranda's father) to prove his worthiness, and willingly completes the tasks assigned to him. He also promises not to compromise her chastity before their wedding night. Ferdinand is earnest, faithful, innocent, and fundamentally good.

GONZALO | Gonzalo is an advisor to the King of Naples who is travelling with the King's party when the ship is wrecked upon Prospero's island. Years earlier, Gonzalo helped to make sure that Prospero and Miranda were taken care of when they were banished from Naples, and that Prospero was not without his vast library of books. Gonzalo is also a glass-half-full kind of a guy, commenting regularly on the beauty of the island, the party's luck in having managed to survive the shipwreck, and on the wonder of the reconciliation between the King and Prospero at the play's end.

TRINCULO | Trinculo is King Alonso's court jester who has been shipwrecked along with the rest of the King's party on Prospero's island. Along with his friend Stephano, Trinculo is in a drunken state for much of the play, and provides a comic foil for the more stately characters. Trinculo is a bit of a bumbling fool, but goes along with the plans of Stephano and Caliban (who has decided to make Stephano his new master) to attempt to overtake Prospero and become rulers of the island.

STEPHANO | The constantly inebriated Stephano is a butler in Alonso's court and has been shipwrecked along with the rest of the King's party. A bumbling, hilarious fool, Stephano is mistaken for a god by Caliban (a native of the island and Prospero's servant) after he feeds Caliban wine. Caliban decides to make Stephano his master, and Stephano, surprised but more than willing to step into the role, begins to play the part of the king to Caliban's groveling subject. Together with Stephano's friend Trinculo (the court jester), they plot to overtake Prospero and become the rulers of the island.

ARIEL | Ariel is a Puck-like trickster, a spirit of the air, and a servant to Prospero. Delightfully mischievous, shape-shifting, and endowed with magical powers, Ariel was saved by Prospero from imprisonment in a tree by the former ruler of the island, a witch named Sycorax, and henceforth has served as his willing helper. Throughout the play, Ariel does Prospero's bidding joyfully, skillfully and ostentatiously, as he awaits his imminent liberation from his master's reign.

SEBASTIAN | Sebastian is Alonso's conspiratorial younger brother who, along with Antonio, unsuccessfully plots to kill Alonso in his sleep. Sebastian and Antonio are near mirror images of one another: both are younger brothers to more politically powerful men, and both are easily classified as amoral megalomaniacs, more interested in their own political advancement than anything else.

IRIS | One of three spirits Prospero calls forth to enact a marriage ritual for Ferdinand and Miranda who takes the form of Iris, Juno's messenger and the goddess of the rainbow.

CERES | One of three spirits Prospero calls forth to enact a marriage ritual for Ferdinand and Miranda who takes the form of Ceres, the goddess of agriculture.

JUNO | One of three spirits Prospero calls forth to enact a marriage ritual for Ferdinand and Miranda who takes the form of Juno, queen of the gods.

ADRIAN | A lord in Alonso, the King of Naples', court and a passenger aboard the shipwrecked vessel, Alonso attempts to comfort the king when he comes to believe that his son, Ferdinand, has drowned after being lost at sea during the storm.

FRANCISCO | A lord in Alonso, the King of Naples', court and a passenger aboard the shipwrecked vessel. Like Adrian, Francisco tries to be of some help to the king during the ordeal.

BOATSWAIN | Assistant to the Master of the Ship and member of the crew, the Boatswain issues commands when the ship is suddenly struck by the tempest. Antonio and Sebastian are threatened by his authoritarian tone and attempt to undermine him. The Boatswain reappears in the last act to describe what befell the ship's crew after the boat was shipwrecked on the island (namely, they were all fast asleep and awoke to find the ship in one piece, untouched, "as when we first put out to sea" [V.i].)

MASTER OF THE SHIP | *In the play's beginning, as the tempest descends upon the King and his companion's vessel, the Master of the Ship attempts to embolden the sailors to continue moving through the storm. His efforts fail, however, as a spell that Ariel (Prospero's spirit servant) makes them lose faith and abandon ship. At the play's end, they bring the group back to Italy.*

MARINERS / SAILORS / NYMPHS / REAPERS