



# THE ALLEY THEATRE | 2022-2023 SEASON

## Show & Character Descriptions

**ALLEY THEATRE GENERAL AUDITIONS** - Saturday & Sunday, October 15 & 16, 2022

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NOVEMBER 10, 11, 12, 13, 2022

Rehearsal Window: Oct. 17th – Nov. 9th

**THE CRUCIBLE** by Arthur Miller

Directed by Zarah Shejule

*In the insular, Puritan community of 1692 Salem, Massachusetts, a group of young girls are found dancing in the woods, and immediately fall ill. When no earthly cause can be determined, the citizens of Salem suspect that some more sinister force may be at hand. As long-held grudges turn to violent disputes, humiliating secrets are exposed and disseminated, and the line between truth and pretense becomes increasingly blurry, the citizens' dogged determination to root out evil becomes more dangerous than the evil itself. When the burden of proof is invisible and the crime too terrible to name, everyone becomes a suspect, and no one is safe. The Crucible, Arthur Miller's remarkable 1963 play, remains as relevant as ever, and carries with it a stern warning: in every community torn by suspicion, the most dangerous threat may be the community itself.*

### CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

**Abigail Williams** | 17 years old. A young orphan girl of Salem. She is the servant and niece of Reverend Parris, and worked for a time in John Proctor's home (she was let go after Proctor's wife discovered Abigail's affair with her husband.) Proctor ended his relationship with Abigail when they were discovered by his wife, and she was let go from her post, but Abigail is still deeply in lust with Proctor. She will do just about anything to replace Elizabeth in his heart--including drinking "charms to kill [Elizabeth]," accusing Elizabeth of attempted murder and witchcraft, and challenging the most powerful men in town (such as Deputy Governor Danforth) in order to bend them to her will. In Miller's words, Abigail has an "endless capacity for dissembling." She is incredibly intelligent, sensual, and determined, and uses these qualities to manipulate others to get what she wants. Abigail is still a young girl and, as such, is self-centered, self-important, and rebellious. Even so, Abigail has the maturity and deviousness to use these traits for cruelty. Her fiery temper and ruthlessness make her incredibly dangerous. Abigail is the ringleader of the Salem girls, and they both revere her and fear her. Although she is something of a temptress and a manipulator, she is also a young woman desperate to be free of the restrictions of Puritan life. She is both a villain, and a sympathetic young girl, trapped in an oppressive culture. The character of Abigail Williams is based on the historical figure (though her age and relationship with John Proctor is an invention of Miller's)

**Elizabeth Proctor** | 30s. John Proctor's wife. Elizabeth is a righteous, honest, and proud woman who sees in shades of right and wrong-- she doesn't traffic in gray areas. At one point in Act Two, John refers to his wife as "goodness." At times, her principled virtuousness makes Elizabeth seem cold. Yet although Elizabeth is wounded by her husband's adulterous affair with Abigail Williams, she still loves him with a fierceness that balances out her austere manner. Elizabeth maintains a goodness and simplicity that is intimidating to Abigail, who, despite her youth, sensuality, and manipulation, is truly no competition for Elizabeth in Proctor's heart. Elizabeth refuses to judge anyone, even her husband, which demonstrates an inner strength that goes unrivaled by any other character. Even when she is arrested, Elizabeth goes calmly and willingly -- by contrast, her husband is explosive with rage. Elizabeth always has the moral high ground, but she doesn't employ it often. The character of Elizabeth Proctor is based on the historical figure (though Miller has altered her age)

**John Proctor** | Mid-30s to 40s. A farmer who lives just outside of Salem Village with his wife, Elizabeth, and three sons. John Proctor is known to be a principled man with a profound sense of personal integrity and a keen hatred of hypocrisy. Miller saw Proctor as hero in the form of a common, hardworking man with distinct flaws: namely, that Proctor engaged in an affair with his 17-year-old servant girl, Abigail Williams, before his wife discovered the tryst and sent Abigail away. Despite his dalliance with Abigail, Proctor is deeply in love with his wife, Elizabeth, and believes her to be a generous, honest, and independent woman. He trusts her implicitly, even as his guilt over his indiscretion sours their relationship. Proctor is independent, strong-willed, and somewhat rebellious. His dislike of the new reverend, Samuel Parris, causes Proctor to diminish his attendance at church, resist having his sons baptized, and work on the Sabbath day -- all of which are forbidden actions in Puritan society. Despite Proctor's lukewarm relationship to the Puritan tradition and his own adulterous sins, he has a strong moral compass and a powerful sense of guilt about his failings. Proctor hates pretense -- in others and in himself. Even when he knows that his life will end on the gallows, Proctor refuses to sign his name to a confession of guilt, saying, "I have given you my soul; leave me my name!" The character of John Proctor is based on the historical figure (though Miller has altered his age)

**Rev. Samuel Parris** | Mid to late 40s. Parris is the new reverend of Salem Village, having taken the position after spending a long period of time as a merchant in Barbados. Unlike previous reverends in Salem, Parris holds property and takes payment, which makes some residents of Salem suspicious of his intentions. In addition to Parris' un-Puritan acquisition of land and wealth, he is also disliked in town for his sermons, which tend to feature themes of hellfire and damnation. Parris rightly worries over his reputation in town, though he has the support of certain wealthy Salem residents, like Thomas and Ann Putnam. Parris tends to make decisions based on self-interest: protecting his finances, his power, and his reputation for holiness. Parris stands by his claims of witchcraft even when all evidence points to the contrary -- for example, when Abigail Williams steals from his strongbox and runs away -- until his own life is put in danger. Parris lacks perspective when it comes to religion, and expects Salem residents to treat him as the ultimate power and authority in town. The character of Reverend Parris is based on the historical figure

**Mary Warren** | 17 years old; servant to John and Elizabeth Proctor. She is described by Miller as a "subservient, naïve, lonely girl." Mary is easily swayed by persuasion and coercion, and thus is pushed back and forth between the control of Abigail and the other girls crying witchcraft, and John Proctor, who is determined to discredit them. Mary is close to Abigail Williams, the ringleader of the girls, but is used by Abigail as a tool to achieve her objectives, rather than as a friend. Despite Mary's timid and fragile nature, she is not immune to the heady sensation of power, and at times, she indulges in her newfound status as one of the charmed girls. Mary struggles deeply with her conscience in maintaining these claims, however, and confesses to their fabrication -- before succumbing, once again, to lies when accused of witchcraft herself. Mary is easily wrapped up in the hysteria of the girls, and lacks the strength to fully emerge from under Abigail's sway. The physical manifestations of her "affliction" are real -- such as fainting or chilling her own skin -- due to the strength of her imagination and her powerful desire to please. The role of Mary Warren is based on the historical figure

**Judge George Danforth** | Late 50s to 60s. The Deputy Governor of Massachusetts, called to Salem in order to preside over the Salem Witch Trials. Danforth is a traditionalist, but well-respected as a level-headed and thoughtful judge. At times, Danforth's moral certainty makes him pompous in his righteousness. Eventually, this confidence leads him to become trapped in the horrific situation he helped create in Salem. He demands respect, and on rare occasions lapses into angry outrage in order to secure it. Ultimately, he trusts in the power of the court and has great pride in delivering justice. Danforth is the sole pillar of calm in the chaos that overtakes the trials, likely due to his imperious and controlling nature. Religion is deeply important to Danforth, and he relies on his faith to guide his decisions. The character of Judge Danforth is based on the historical figure Thomas Danforth (though Miller invented Danforth's role in the trials)

**Judge Hathorne** | Early to late 60s. Hathorne is a judge in Salem, described by Miller as "bitter [and] remorseless." He is second-in-command to Judge Danforth. Hathorne is utterly convinced of his moral certitude, which leads him to dismiss any dissent as mutinous and inherently false.

Hathorne usually serves as prosecutor and interrogator, and he executes his interviews with viciousness, arrogance, and certainty in the accused person's guilt. Hathorne's ultimate goal is to elicit confessions of witchcraft. The role of Hawthorne is based on the historical figure of the same name -- the grandfather of author Nathaniel Hawthorne, who changed his last name in order to gain more distance from his infamous relative

**Rev. John Hale** | 30s to 40s. Hale is a well-respected minister and an expert in witchcraft, who has been summoned to Salem from his home in Beverly. He is a Harvard-educated man. Hale believes earnestly in the existence of witchcraft, and even more importantly, that he has seen proof of it. Furthermore, Hale believes he has the power to rescue the afflicted from the clutches of Satan and bring them to God. Hale is thoughtful, judicious, and honest, and supports the trials at the outset, based on his own experience of encountering witchcraft. Hales' confidence is shaken, however, when things take a turn in Salem, and residents who are known to be honest and God-fearing are accused. Though Hale's arrival in Salem is one of the actions that sets the hysteria in motion, his thoughtfulness and open mind allow him to recognize when lies begin to overpower the truth. Eventually, Hale's guilt overpowers him, and Hale speaks out against the trials while they are still happening. Even after the events conclude, Hale remains in Salem in order to try to convince the condemned to confess and save their own lives, and, therefore, help relieve his own overpowering guilt. The role of Hale is based on the historical figure

**Rebecca Nurse** | 72 years old. Rebecca, the wife of Francis Nurse, is one of the most respected members of the Salem community. She is kind, intelligent, and pious. As a grandmother twenty-six times over, Rebecca understands children and their complexities, obsessions, and tendencies to misrepresent themselves. She falls victim to the witch-hunt hysteria when the Putnams accuse her of being a witch and she refuses to confess. She is morally upright, though physically withered. A principled, gentle, faithful soul who is calm and dignified in the face of adversity. Rebecca is compassionate towards her fellow puritans and faces her fate in a measured, logical way, despite knowing she is innocent and being unable to prove it to her community. The character of Rebecca Nurse is based on the historical figure

**Giles Corey** | 83 years old. Giles Corey is a feisty, old Salem farmer who is known for his tendency to file lawsuits against his fellow townspeople. He is impatient, firm, and possesses a uniquely strong will. Despite his age, Corey can hold his own both intellectually and physically. He's a curious man, and when he asks Reverend Hale about why his wife, Martha, might be struggling to remember the Lord's Prayer, he inadvertently sets her up for an eventual accusation of witchcraft. Giles loves Martha, and fights hard for her, as his experience with lawsuits means that he knows the law inside and out. His reputation as a bit of a rascal, however, does him no favors when he tries to fight bravely on behalf of his wife. Although Corey is a bit of a gadfly, he is good at heart and deeply brave. When he is asked to testify in front of the Salem court, he stands mute, rather than play into the hands of the false judges. Eventually, Corey is held in contempt of court for his silence, and pressed to death with large stones. His final words were: "More weight." The character of Giles Corey is based on the historical figure

**Francis Nurse** | An elderly, (in his 70s) well-respected, and wealthy man of the village, Francis Nurse is the kind of person implicitly trusted by those on both sides of an argument. He is the husband of Rebecca Nurse, a well-loved and trusted woman in Salem. Nurse is a good, Puritan man, and considered by his fellows to lack any touch of selfishness or ill-intent. He trusts the judicial and religious system in place; when it becomes clear that logic and reason have disappeared from the Salem of 1692, Nurse is heartbroken. The loss of his wife is even more emotionally devastating. Thanks to an old land dispute, Nurse holds old grudges against Thomas Putnam and his wife. The character of Francis Nurse is based on the historical figure

**Thomas Putnam** | Mid-40s to 50s. A wealthy landowner in Salem; the husband of Ann and father of Ruth, one of the afflicted girls. Putnam is well-known in the community for his family's wealth, greediness in the acquisition of land, and litigious acts against his community. Even in times of chaos during the trials, Putnam remains clear-eyed and opportunistic, always looking for a chance to make a profit: he accuses people of witchcraft in order to better his own interests, buying their land once they are in jail or have been executed. Putnam is arrogant, and truly believes that he is the most intelligent man in Salem. He holds no friendships, but uses powerful

alliances (such as with Reverend Parris) to better achieve his objectives. When Putnam's brother-in-law failed to become a Salem minister, Putnam was deeply resentful, and continues to hold on to this resentment. Eventually uses his resentment as a weapon against Reverend Parris. The character of Thomas Putnam is based on the historical figure

**Ann Putnam.** | 45 years old; the wife of the wealthy landowner Thomas Putnam. Ann has given birth to eight children -- but seven died before they were a day old, and Ann is convinced that they were murdered by supernatural means. As such, she is easily convinced of the veracity of the witch hunt hysteria. In Miller's words, she is a "twisted soul," haunted by death and terrible nightmares. Ann is deeply jealous of Rebecca Nurse, who has had the good fortune of giving birth to eleven children and being grandmother to thirty-six. She is deeply certain that witchcraft (and the other women in the village who practice it) are to blame for her family's misfortunes. Ann's grief has made her bitter and fragile, and she manages by lashing out at others. She also trafficks in spirits herself, sending her daughter, Ruth, to speak to Tituba (the slave of Reverend Parris) about attempting to conjure the spirits of Ann's dead children. Based on the historical figure Ann Putnam-- not to be confused with Ann Putnam Jr., one of the most prolific accusers in the trial, who Miller called "Ruth" to avoid confusion.

**Tituba** | Early to late 40s, Black. Caribbean accent. Originally from Barbados, Tituba was brought with Reverend Parris to Salem as his slave. Although Tituba is by far the lowest-ranking person in the Salem community, she earnestly cares for Betty Parris and applies herself to each task with humility and intelligence. Tituba is a faithful woman, and because her native religious tradition is seen by the residents of Salem as something to be feared and exorcised, Tituba graciously accepts her master's faith. When pressed by the girls, Tituba demonstrates certain ritualistic traditions of Barbados, including drinking blood to lay curses. In fact, her faith is merely misconstrued by the Puritans -- there is nothing inherently evil about her spells and charms. Tituba wants to do right by Reverend Parris and his colleagues, and especially by Betty, which leads Tituba to confess to crimes of witchcraft she did not commit. The role of Tituba is based on the historical figure

**Betty Parris** | 10 years old. Betty is the daughter of Reverend Parris, and the cousin of Abigail Williams. She falls into an illness after she is caught dancing in the forest with Tituba, Abigail, and some other girls in Salem, and it is her illness that fuels the first rumors of witchcraft. Betty is timid by nature, and is deeply fearful of Abigail. She is easily swayed by Abigail's orders, particularly because she genuinely fears Abigail's power -- especially after Abigail drinks blood in an attempt to curse Elizabeth Proctor.

**Ezekiel Cheever** | Early 30s to 40s. Cheever has been appointed as an officer of the court, and he does his duty with earnestness and determination -- even when his duty requires him to arrest his friends. Cheever is honest and just, and tries to do right by all. In the trials, however, Cheever must wrestle with his personal morality when he finds it in conflict with his sense of duty. Ultimately, he sides with duty, and joins with Judge Danforth in continuing to persecute those accused of witchcraft. This role is often doubled with Marshal Herrick and Hopkins, the jailer. Based on the historical figure.

**Marshall George Herrick** | 40 years old. Herrick is a marshal of the court. He executes his duties with compassion and sympathy, treating the accused with dignity and kindness. Herrick is dutiful and follows orders to the letter, but never exerts undue influence or acts with zealousness. Eventually, Herrick's guilt over his part in the trials leads him to numb his pain with alcohol. This role is often doubled with Ezekiel Cheever and Hopkins, the jailer. The role of Herrick is based on the historical figure

**Mercy Lewis** | 18 years old. Described by Miller as a "fat, sly, merciless girl," Mercy is Abigail Williams' most loyal follower and a servant in the home of the Putnam family. She joins Abigail in bullying the other girls, and is quick to fake her own afflictions in order to gain Abigail's favor. She is aware of Abigail's indiscretion with John Proctor and seems to admire her for it. Mercy is selfish and clever, and joins Abigail in running away from Salem following the trials after robbing Reverend Parris' strongbox. The role of Mercy Lewis is based on the historical figure

**Susanna Walcott** | Mid to late teens. Susanna is the servant of Doctor Griggs, Salem's local physician. She is one of Abigail Williams' followers and an "afflicted" girl. Susanna is nervous and jumpy; she is less suited to lying and pretense than Abigail or Mercy. The role of Susanna is based on the historical figure Mary Walcott (her name was changed by Miller in order to distinguish Susanna Walcott from Mary Warren)

**Sarah Good** | Mid-40s to Mid-60s. One of the first women accused of witchcraft, Sarah Good is a homeless woman who confesses to witchcraft in order to save her own life. She descends into something like madness in jail, and thinks she speaks to Satan. Sarah appears old, as she has been broken by life, but may in fact be much younger than she seems. The role of Sarah Good is based on the historical figure

**Hopkins** | Hopkins is a jailer in Salem's prison. This role is often doubled with Marshal Herrick and Ezekiel Cheever, or cut entirely, as Hopkins has no lines.

**Puritan Girls** | Range in age between 11 years old and 18 years old. Some productions add a chorus of Puritan village girls, who appear at the trial and in the woods and back up the claims Abigail is making against the "witches." These girls are not called for in Miller's text. In historical records, other girls were participants in the trials

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DECEMBER 15, 16, 17, 18, 2022

**A TUNA CHRISTMAS** by Jaston Williams, Joe Sears, and Ed Howard

Starring Raymond Kester, Andy Persinger, and Martin Stapleton

Directed by Tiffany Jackson

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JANUARY 19, 20, 21, 22, 2023

*Rehearsal Window: Dec. 19<sup>th</sup> – Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>*

**SPOON RIVER ANTHOLOGY** by Charles Aidman, Edgar Lee Masters, Naomi Caryl Hirshhorn

Directed by Karen Sipes

*Via musical interludes, we are introduced in a cemetery to the ghosts of those who were inhabitants of this town, and whose secrets have gone with them to the grave. There are sixty-odd characterizations and vignettes in this constantly interesting entertainment offering an amazingly varied array of roles and impersonations, from young lovers and preachers and teachers to the funny chronicle of the poor mixed-up Jew who ends up in the wrong cemetery. Both the solid and humorous sides of life are portrayed with fetching ballads and the free-verse form of Masters.*

**CASTING:**

**2 FEMALES & 3 MALES** presenting multiple "vignettes"

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FEBRUARY 16, 17, 18, 19, 2023

*Rehearsal Window: Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> – Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>*

**ROPE** by Patrick Anderson

Directed by Steph & Cameron Vale

*For the mere sake of adventure, danger, and the "fun of the thing," Wyndham Brandon persuades his weak-minded friend, Charles Granillo, to assist him in the murder of a fellow undergraduate, a perfectly harmless man named Ronald Raglan. They place the body in a wooden chest, and to add spice to their handiwork, invite a few acquaintances, including the*

dead youth's father, to a party, the chest with its gruesome contents serving as a supper table. The horror and tension are worked up gradually; thunder grows outside, the guests leave, and we see the reactions of the two murderers, watched closely by the suspecting lame poet, Rupert Cadell. Finally, they break down under the strain and confess their guilt.

#### CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

**Wyndham Brandon** | arrogant, superior, domineering, athletic. (Male, playing age: 20/30s)

**Charles Granillo** | weak and easily led. Nervous and fidgety. Dominated by Brandon. (Male, 20/30s)

**Kenneth Raglan** | a fawning hanger-on. Has a soft spot for Leila Arden. (Male, 20/30s)

**Leila Arden** | demonstrative friend of Brandon and Granillo. Likes being the center of attention. (Female, 20/30s)

**Sir Johnstone Kentley** | elderly book collector, the father of the murdered man (Male, 50/60s or older)

**Mrs. Debenham** | a rather silly, upper-class woman. (Female, 40s)

**Rupert Cadell** | an older acquaintance of Brandon and Granillo. Poetic and a dreamer. Gradually unravels the murder plot using old fashioned detective work (Male, 30/40/50s)

**Sabot** | a surly manservant to Brandon and Granillo. (Male, 50s)

**Ronald Kentley** | the murdered student friend of Brandon and Granillo. (non-speaking part, seen briefly at the beginning and end of the play.) (Male, 20/30s)

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MARCH 16, 17, 18, 19, 2023 | ANDERSON MUSEUM of ART

Rehearsal Window: Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> – March 15<sup>th</sup>

**ROMEO & JULIET** by William Shake-Speare

Directed by Kayla Cange

*Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is a love story for the ages. The Capulet and Montague households have been embroiled in a bloody fight for as long as anyone in Verona, Italy can remember. The death toll is mounting, and it seems that the best thing anyone can do is keep the two sides as far from each other as possible. But when young Romeo Montague crashes the Capulet ball, he falls head-over-heels in love with young Juliet Capulet – and she falls just as in love with him. What ensues is one of the most romantic and devastating love stories in the theatrical canon.*

#### CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

**Romeo** | The son and heir of Montague and Lady Montague. A young man of about sixteen, Romeo is handsome, intelligent, and sensitive. Though impulsive and immature, his idealism and passion make him an extremely likable character. He lives in the middle of a violent feud between his family and the Capulets, but he is not at all interested in violence. His only interest is love. At the beginning of the play he is madly in love with a woman named Rosaline, but the instant he lays eyes on Juliet, he falls in love with her and forgets Rosaline. Thus, Shakespeare gives us every reason to question how real Romeo's new love is, but Romeo goes to extremes to prove the seriousness of his feelings. He secretly marries Juliet, the daughter of his father's worst enemy; he happily takes abuse from Tybalt; and he would rather die than live without his beloved. Romeo is also an affectionate and devoted friend to his relative Benvolio, Mercutio, and Friar Lawrence.

**Juliet** | The daughter of Capulet and Lady Capulet. A beautiful thirteen-year-old girl, Juliet begins the play as a naïve child who has thought little about love and marriage, but she grows up quickly upon falling in love with Romeo, the son of her family's great enemy. Because she is a girl in an aristocratic family, she has none of the freedom Romeo has to roam around the city, climb over walls in the middle of the night, or get into swordfights. Nevertheless, she shows amazing courage in trusting her entire life and future to Romeo, even refusing to believe the worst reports about him after he gets involved in a fight with her cousin. Juliet's closest friend and confidant is her nurse, though she's willing to shut the Nurse out of her life the moment the Nurse turns against Romeo.

**Friar Lawrence** | A Franciscan friar, friend to both Romeo and Juliet. Kind, civic-minded, a proponent of moderation, and always ready with a plan, Friar Lawrence secretly marries the impassioned lovers in hopes that the union might eventually bring peace to Verona. As well as being a Catholic holy man, Friar Lawrence is also an expert in the use of seemingly mystical potions and herbs.

**Mercutio** | A kinsman to the Prince, and Romeo's close friend. One of the most extraordinary characters in all of Shakespeare's plays, Mercutio overflows with imagination, wit, and, at times, a strange, biting satire and brooding fervor. Mercutio loves wordplay, especially sexual double entendres. He can be quite hotheaded, and hates people who are affected, pretentious, or obsessed with the latest fashions. He finds Romeo's romanticized ideas about love tiresome and tries to convince Romeo to view love as a simple matter of sexual appetite.

**The Nurse** | Juliet's nurse, the woman who breast-fed Juliet when she was a baby and has cared for Juliet her entire life. A vulgar, long-winded, and sentimental character, the Nurse provides comic relief with her frequently inappropriate remarks and speeches. But, until a disagreement near the play's end, the Nurse is Juliet's faithful confidante and loyal intermediary in Juliet's affair with Romeo. She provides a contrast with Juliet, given that her view of love is earthy and sexual, whereas Juliet is idealistic and intense. The Nurse believes in love and wants Juliet to have a nice-looking husband, but the idea that Juliet would want to sacrifice herself for love is incomprehensible to her.

**Tybalt** | A Capulet, Juliet's cousin on her mother's side. Vain, fashionable, supremely aware of courtesy and the lack of it, he becomes aggressive, violent, and quick to draw his sword when he feels his pride has been injured. Once drawn, his sword is something to be feared. He loathes Montagues.

**Capulet** | The patriarch of the Capulet family, father of Juliet, husband of Lady Capulet, and enemy, for unexplained reasons, of Montague. He truly loves his daughter, though he is not well acquainted with Juliet's thoughts or feelings, and seems to think that what is best for her is a "good" match with Paris. Often prudent, he commands respect and propriety, but he is liable to fly into a rage when either is lacking.

**Lady Capulet** | Juliet's mother, Capulet's wife. A woman who herself married young (by her own estimation she gave birth to Juliet at close to the age of fourteen), she is eager to see her daughter marry Paris. She is an ineffectual mother, relying on the Nurse for moral and pragmatic support.

**Montague** | Romeo's father, the patriarch of the Montague clan and bitter enemy of Capulet. At the beginning of the play, he is chiefly concerned about Romeo's melancholy.

**Lady Montague** | Romeo's mother, Montague's wife. She dies of grief after Romeo is exiled from Verona.

**Paris** | A kinsman of the Prince, and the suitor of Juliet most preferred by Capulet. Once Capulet has promised him he can marry Juliet, he behaves very presumptuous toward her, acting as if they are already married.

**Benvolio** | Montague's nephew, Romeo's cousin and thoughtful friend. Benvolio makes a genuine effort to defuse violent scenes in public places, though Mercutio accuses him of having a nasty temper in private. He spends most of the play trying to help Romeo get his mind off Rosaline, even after Romeo has fallen in love with Juliet.

**Prince Escalus** | The Prince of Verona. A kinsman of Mercutio and Paris. As the seat of political power in Verona, he is concerned about maintaining the public peace at all costs.

**Friar John** | A Franciscan friar charged by Friar Lawrence with taking the news of Juliet's false death to Romeo in Mantua. Friar John is held up in a quarantined house, and the message never reaches Romeo.

**Balthasar** | Romeo's dedicated servant, who brings Romeo the news of Juliet's death, unaware that her death is a ruse.

**Sampson & Gregory** | Two servants of the house of Capulet, who, like their master, hate the Montagues. At the outset of the play, they successfully provoke some Montague men into a fight.

**Abram** | Montague's servant, who fights with Sampson and Gregory in the first scene of the play.

**The Apothecary** | An apothecary in Mantua. Had he been wealthier, he might have been able to afford to value his morals more than money, and refused to sell poison to Romeo.

**Peter** | A Capulet servant who invites guests to Capulet's feast and escorts the Nurse to meet with Romeo. He is illiterate, and a bad singer.

**Rosaline** | The woman with whom Romeo is infatuated at the beginning of the play. Rosaline never appears onstage, but it is said by other characters that she is very beautiful and has sworn to live a life of chastity.

**The Chorus** | The Chorus is a single character who, as developed in Greek drama, functions as a narrator offering commentary on the play's plot and themes.

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## **THE ALLEY in THE PARK Productions**

JUNE 9, 10, 11, 2023 | GRAY'S PARK

Rehearsal Window: May 8<sup>th</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup>

**CHARLEY'S AUNT** by Brandon Thomas

Directed by Tony Johnson

*Charley and Jack love Amy and Kitty. Amy is about to go away, and Charley thinks he may miss his opportunity to ask for her hand. Then he discovers that his aunt, a Brazilian woman he hardly knows, is coming for lunch. How fortuitous! Now the aunt can chaperone while the boys ask the girls to marry them. Naturally, things don't go as planned. Donna Lucia, the aunt, is late, and their friend, Lord Fancourt Babberley (Babbs) shows up in drag. He is convinced to pretend to be Donna Lucia, and a wild afternoon of mistaken identity, young love, old love, angry uncles, and one beautiful, exotic aunt ensues. In the end, just as it looks like Uncle Stephen is going to ruin everything, the real Donna Lucia steps in and graciously puts an end to the madness. All the lovers end up together and happy, except for Uncle Stephen, who was starting to fall for Babbs!*

### **CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:**

**Jack Chesney** | Jack is a nice, young Oxford student who loves Kitty. He and Charley are both stereotypes of the well-meaning, slightly ineffectual, upper-middle-class Oxford student of the Victorian era. Jack's father arrives and informs him that their financial situation will be limited in the near future because of debt. Jack decides that his father should marry Charley's rich aunt.

**Charley Wykeham** | Charley is an orphan whose Oxford education has been paid for by his mysterious Brazilian aunt. He has never met her, but she is coming for lunch just in time to chaperone his date with Amy, whom he intends to marry. Charley is a nice, young man, intent on doing the socially correct thing. When the aunt is late for lunch, Charley is desperate for a chaperone, so he and Jack convince their friend Babbs (who conveniently shows up in drag) to stand in.

**Lord Fancourt "Babbs" Babberley** | Babbs is Jack and Charley's friend at school. He is a theatrical sort, loud and funny, and prone to showing up in drag. The young men decide to invite him to their lunch. When Charley's aunt is late, the whole luncheon is in jeopardy, but



Babbs shows up on his way to a play rehearsal, clad in an old woman's prim and proper clothing. Charley and Jack convince him to stand in for Aunt Lucia, which he does admirably, so much so that both Jack's father and Amy's uncle want to propose to him. Babbs is also in love, but the young woman he loves has disappeared. Fortunately, she shows up with Aunt Lucia, and she and Babbs are happily reunited, but only after he faints at the prospect of her finding him in an old lady's clothing.

**Kitty Verdun** | Kitty is the ward of Amy's uncle, Stephen Spettigue. She and Jack are in love, but her guardian is very strict and protective of her. She behaves properly at all times, although she annoys her guardian by dining with Jack without his permission. Kitty accepts Jack's proposal and the couple are finally able to wed.

**Amy Spettigue** | Amy is Stephen Spettigue's niece. She loves Charley, but she is a very proper young lady, and she can't come to Charley's rooms without a chaperone. She is about to go away to Scotland with her strict uncle, which prompts Charley's desperate search for an older woman to join them at lunch. Fortunately, the situation is resolved, and Amy accepts Charley's marriage proposal.

**Donna Lucia D'Alvarez** | Donna Lucia is Charley's aunt, a very elegant, beautiful woman in her forties. She was the secretary to a very wealthy man in Brazil, whom she married on his deathbed. She now holds his fortune, and she has paid for Charley's education. She is coming to lunch, but she has been delayed. When she arrives, she finds an impersonator, in the form of Babbs, chaperoning the lunch. Donna Lucia pretends to be Mrs. Beverley-Smythe so that she won't disrupt the hilarious proceedings. She delights in torturing Babbs by asking him questions about her life in Brazil. She meets Jack's father and realizes that he is the young naval officer she was in love with many years ago. They resume their romance.

**Colonel Sir Francis Chesney** | The Colonel is Jack's father. He surprises Jack by showing up at lunch and telling his son that they are in reduced financial straits due to debt. Jack hatches a plan, which his father agrees to, in which the Colonel will court and marry Charley's wealthy aunt. When the Colonel meets "Donna Lucia" as played by Babbs, he is not at all attracted to her, but he gamely pursues her. When the real Donna Lucia shows up, he realizes she is the woman he loved many years ago, and the two are happily reunited.

**Stephen Spettigue** | Uncle Stephen is Amy's uncle and Kitty's guardian. He is prissy and fastidious, and he insists that the young women adhere strictly to his rules, including no lunches with young men without a chaperone present. He is suspicious that something is afoot at the luncheon, but when he realizes that the "old woman" is Charley's rich aunt, he is immediately drawn to her. He courts Babbs furiously, and when he finds out he has been deceived, he nearly withdraws his permission for the girls to marry. Donna Lucia soothes his ruffled feathers, and he relents, allowing everyone to pair up successfully.

**Brassett** | A waiter at Oxford.

**Ela Delahay** | Ela is the young woman Babbs fell in love with while he was cruising the Mediterranean. She disappeared, and he thinks she is lost to him. However, Ela was orphaned and has become the ward of Donna Lucia, although she has her own considerable wealth. When Babbs's true identity is revealed, the couple are happily reunited.

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AUGUST 18, 19, 20, 2023 | GRAY'S PARK  
Rehearsal Window: July 24<sup>th</sup> – August 17<sup>th</sup>  
**OEDIPUS REX** by Sophocles  
Directed by Rick Vale

*The newly crowned young king of Thebes, Oedipus, having solved the riddle of the sphinx, has married the widowed Theban queen Jocasta and fathered two daughters. A plague, however,*

has overtaken his kingdom since he took the throne. Through a series of reveals and hubristic missteps that bring Oedipus' past to light, he discovers that it is Oedipus himself who has brought this ill fate to his city, having fulfilled a prophecy made when he was born—that he would kill his own father and marry his mother. In its tragic ending, *Oedipus the King*, or *Oedipus Rex* as it is known by its Latinized name, is the inspiration for many modern literary and social philosophies, including the concepts of hubris, literary tragedy, and the Freudian Oedipal Complex. This Sophoclean drama, first performed in 455 BCE, is the first in the Oedipus trilogy, which follows the tragic lives of Oedipus and his daughters, culminating in the death of Antigone. Sophocles' Oedipus is not an original story or plot; the myths and characters of the play would have been well-known to the Greek audience. However, classicists believe that Sophocles added the unique and horrifying element of Oedipus' self-blindness to his production, a new element that would have made a powerful and memorable impact on a well-known story.

### **CASTING THE FOLLOWING ROLES:**

**Oedipus** | Oedipus is a proud and confident king who assumed the throne owing to his wit and intellect. He cares deeply for his people, and seems unaffected by his past, as the adopted prince of Corinth. He believes that knowledge and truth are of the utmost value, and his ambition and even aggression to find out truth, sometimes at the expense of others, ultimately leads to his downfall. He is known as a great literary example of "hubris," which is often interpreted as pride. However the term actually means "missing the mark" in ancient Greek. Oedipus is ultimately responsible for his situation, but he is not "guilty" in that he did not pursue the information and his situation out of evil or ill intentions. While some interpretations view him as a victim of fate, the will of the gods, or prophecy, other interpretations rely on his aggressive pursuit of knowledge and his own identity and self-awareness as the cause of his downfall. Sophocles' inclusion of Oedipus' gory self-blinding was a new enhancement to this well-known story, and gives the character a particularly dramatic range in this classic Greek tale. Oedipus' name means "swollen foot" in Greek, and he is named after his condition as a baby, when his parents received a prophecy that their son would murder his father and marry his mother, so they bound his feet and told a servant to throw him from a mountain. The servant, in compassion, left the child to be found and saved, but the injury to his foot remained.

**Creon** | Creon is a character and name that appears in multiple Greek dramas, and while the relationships between he and the other characters and his identity are not always the same, the role he plays in Greek tragedy remains consistent. In *Oedipus*, Creon is the brother to Jocasta, and the brother-in-law/uncle to Oedipus. He had assumed power temporarily in previous absences of the king, both when out of the kingdom and when deceased. With Oedipus as king, at first, he claims to not want any of the power or responsibility leading the city, although after he fears that Oedipus has conspired against him, Creon immediately assumes power when Oedipus is shamed and exiled. He is a political and personal advisor to Oedipus, and although Creon tried to keep Oedipus' hubris in check, Oedipus makes him a victim of his aggression and pride. In the political arena, Creon's intellect and logical nature serve as a contrast to Oedipus' emotional and prideful character. Different interpretations of the show portray Creon as a power hungry manipulator, while others portray him as a loyal servant to his people, begrudgingly assuming power he does not want.

**Jocasta** | Jocasta is the loving wife of Oedipus, discovered to also be his mother. It is important that she appears slightly older than he, although her age does not have to be drastically above that of Oedipus, since women often bore children in their mid-late teens in Greek culture. Jocasta is well respected by her people as a widow who mourned her murdered husband, and then offered power to the man who would save her city and its people from the sphinx. Although marrying Oedipus was a political move, she genuinely cares for him, as well as her daughters by him. She appears only in one middle scene of the play, but plays a vital role in the plot and Oedipus' story. She encourages Oedipus to hold his temper and his ambition to learn the truth, both for his own benefit as well as the benefit of others. She intuits that ultimately the prophecy about her son has come true, and upon learning the truth, she hangs herself—a standard Greek trope for suicide/death for women—utterly destroyed by her sinful, albeit uninformed, behavior.

**Tiresias** | Tiresias as a character is a trope of Greek drama, appearing in multiple plays, but always as the same character. He is a blind seer, a wise old man who delivers messages and prophecies. He usually appears as frail and sickly, oftentimes as a beggar or homeless person. This creates the contrast of him having little/lacking stature and knowing all or being the wisest, compared with royal and youthful Oedipus, who knows nothing. The trope of blindness equates to a higher wisdom in Greek mythology and culture. He is somewhat omnipotent in Oedipus, and resists telling Oedipus what he's done. Ultimately, under threat of physical harm, he reluctantly delivers the truth about Oedipus' life and family. Tiresias seemingly knows things about different characters and kingdoms that are beyond the likelihood of any one man truly knowing, but his omnipotence plays a vital role in both his part of the story, as well as in Greek drama.

**The Priest** | The Priest is an old religious leader who implores Oedipus to solve the problem of the plague on the city. He cares for his people, but fears he is too old and will die too soon to be able to save them. He laments that his prayers and role as religious leader has not been able to save them. The Priest admires Oedipus for his intellect and his abilities that brought him to Thebes and made him king, and he is selfless in his desire to have Oedipus stop the plague and be hailed as a hero. Although he speaks independently in scenes to Oedipus, the Priest can be seen as a leader of the Chorus as well. The Priest only appears in the early part of the play.

**First Messenger** | The Messenger reveals a number of vital facts from his past that inform Oedipus' downfall. He reveals that at one time he was a compassionate character, taking a child from a herdsman to be raised by the king and queen, but speaks aggressively and self-assuredly about his past. He is confident in his past actions in a situation in which other characters know less than he, and are fearful of the truth. It is important that this character appear old enough to have been a messenger of the household when Oedipus was born.

**Second Messenger** | The Second Messenger only appears briefly in Oedipus but bears the most powerful news of the play. It is clear this Messenger is familiar with the troubles of Thebes and its people, and laments the trouble that has come to his city and his leaders. He sadly and mournfully delivers the story of Jocasta's suicide by hanging and Oedipus' lamentation. He also delivers the twist in the story that would have been new—and gory—for Greek audiences in this well-known myth: Oedipus' self-blinding. In some productions, the First and Second Messengers are played by the same actor, as they do not appear together on stage.

**The Herdsman** | The Herdsman is brought in by the Messenger to verify the story of Oedipus' unknown past. He is usually portrayed as feeble and compassionate, and becomes the victim of Oedipus' hubris and aggression in search of the truth. The Herdsman has knowledge of the prophecy around Oedipus' fate and wants to avoid bringing pain through the knowledge he carries. He is torn between regretting his actions of saving a helpless baby and bringing pain to others through his act of compassion. The Herdsman appears for only one brief scene, but bears some of the most vital information in the play which leads to the unraveling of Oedipus' story.

**The Chorus** | The Chorus (*multi-generational and multi-gendered in this production*) provide extensive backstory of the Oedipus myth for the audience. They also provide introductions and reactions to most major scenes in the play, guiding the audience through the emotional journey of the performance. The Chorus is a highly emotional, expressive group (*not only the ELDERS/LEADERS but the PEOPLE of that place and time*) that laments the evils brought to their city, guides Oedipus through informed decision-making, and balances logic and emotion as representatives of their city—further highlighting Oedipus' inability to do so. This Sophoclean Chorus would be around a dozen people, with various actors in the Chorus also taking lines individually.