



12 SEPTEMBER - 8 OCTOBER, 2023



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Photo by Trudie Lee

WELCOME TO OUR NEW SEASON

e are thrilled you have joined us for our opening show of our 2023-24 season, a season we are calling 'Theatre For All'.

Thanks to our generous donors and sponsors, we are proud to offer \$39 tickets

for all of the main floor seating, giving more Calgarians the opportunity to experience these amazing shows. In addition, for the first time in our 56-year history, we have an Agatha Christie murder mystery on our stage!

Our \$39 dollar ticket initiative is not only a wonderful way to acknowledge and thank our returning patrons, but a way to connect and introduce ourselves to new audiences. We want your theatre experience to be one that is both memorable and a shared experience with friends, family, and other theatre lovers. Do you enjoy the seat you're sitting in? If so, we encourage you to subscribe and secure your \$39 seats for the whole season, before they sell out.

And there is no better way to start our season than with the greatest mystery in theatre history, *The Mousetrap*. Since its premiere in 1952, the play has wowed London audiences with over 30,000 performances. Opening our 'Theatre For All' season with *The Mousetrap* was an intentional decision. We want to show our subscribers and audiences that the curation of the plays this season are meant to be entertaining, approachable, and universally appealing - just like *The Mousetrap*. Theatre Calgary is a home where audiences can enter the world of theatre magic and lose themselves in stories that make them laugh, reminisce, and feel good about themselves.

We hope you enjoy the show and consider subscribing to the rest of our exciting season.

Oh, and remember...don't tell anyone whodunnit!

- STAFFORD ARIMA
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

- MAYA CHOLDIN

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Cameras and audio/visual recording devices are not permitted in the theatre.
- Video and audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.
- We ask that you please refrain from using your cell phone, smart watch, or any other digital device, in any capacity, during the performance.
- Good theatre etiquette benefits everyone. Please do not talk or unwrap candies during the
 performance, remain in your seat until the curtain call is finished and the house lights have
 been turned on.
- Babies are not permitted in the theatre.
- We also offer relaxed performances. For more information, visit our website.
- Assisted listening devices for the hard of hearing are available at the coat check.
- For first aid assistance, see the house manager, or nearest usher.

SAFETY AND COMFORT

 At Theatre Calgary, we recognize our responsibility to have practical guidelines in place to ensure our performances are safe and enjoyable for everyone. To learn more about our current Safety and Comfort protocols go to theatrecalgary.com/comfort-and-safety or scan here:



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CALGARY HERALD

DIRECTOR'S NOTES



had the privilege of programming eleven seasons of mysteries at Vertigo Theatre. At first I was reticent to program Christie, worrying that the plays were "old chestnuts," and hoping to see an evolution in the mystery theatre genre. Finally in my fourth season with the company, still dubious about the relevance of the work, I gave in to the legion of Christie stalwarts and programmed *The Mousetrap*. 'If I'm going to program an old chestnut of a mystery, why not the mother of all old chestnuts,' I thought.

Sitting in the audience for the very first preview of that production, I had a mixture of trepidation and embarrassment in my gut. The creative team had done

an admirable job, but would the audience be satisfied? What about those folks who had seen this same material on this same stage before? Would they be bored? What followed when the curtain rose was a series of revelations. About the power of theatre that is created for the singular purpose of entertaining an audience. About how a masterpiece of genre can defy time and expectation. And, maybe most importantly, about how even contemporary audiences have an innate desire to suspend their disbelief and be thrilled.

My hope is that tonight this excellent team of artists can give you similar thrills and a much needed escape.

- CRAIG HALL

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of reconciliation, Theatre Calgary acknowledges that we live, work and create on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Îyâxe Nakoda Nations, the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta. They were the original occupants of this land and continue to be here to this day. Theatre Calgary is grateful to have the opportunity to present in this territory.

Theatre Calgary gratefully acknowledges the support provided by the City of Calgary through Calgary Arts Development, the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Foundation for the Arts, the Government of Canada through the Canada Council, Canadian Heritage, and all corporate and private contributors.





















SEASON 23/24
THEATRE FOR ALL



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THERE IS STILL TIME TO SUBSCRIBE TO 6 MORE SHOWS!

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Max Bell Theatre at Arts Commons September 12 - October 8, 2023



presents

THE MOUSETRAP

BY AGATHA CHRISTIE

Director

CRAIG HALL

Set & Video Design

SCOTT REID

Costume Design

DEITRA KALYN*

Lighting Design

BETH KATES*

Sound Design & Composition

JOELYSA PANKANEA

Voice & Dialect Coach

JANE MACFARLANE

Fight Director & Intimacy Coordinator

BRIANNA JOHNSTON

Stage Manager

KENNEDY GREENE

Assistant Stage Manager

MEREDITH JOHNSON

Apprentice Stage Manager

BRIANNA DIODATI

TC MENTORS PROGRAM

Assistant Director CALEIGH CROW
Voice & Dialect LARA SCHMITZ

The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.

*Indicated designers on this production are represented by the Associated Designers of Canada, IATSE Local ADC659.

The Mousetrap is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. concordtheatricals.com

FARREN TIMOTEO

17 OCTOBER - 11 NOVEMBER 2023 MARTHA COHEN THEATRE THEATRECALGARY.COM

THE MOUSETRAP

CAST

Mollie Ralston VANESSA LETICIA JETTÉ

Giles Ralston MIKE TAN

Christopher Wren MATTHEW MOONEY

Mrs. Boyle NATASCHA GIRGIS

Major Metcalf ROBERT KLEIN

Miss Casewell KIT BENZ

Mr. Paravicini CHRISTIAN GOUTSIS

Sergeant Trotter TYRELL CREWS

SETTING

Berkshire, England, 1952.

ACT I

Scene I: The Great Hall at Monkswell Manor. Late afternoon.

Scene II: The same. The following day after lunch.

ACT II

The same. Ten minutes later.

The Mousetrap has one 20-minute intermission.

Head of Sound BRONWYN BOWLBY

Head of Lighting CATHARINE CRUMB

Head Stage Carpenter BEN MOORE

Head Dresser RACHEL MICHELLE SHERIDAN

Assistant Head of Sound MICHAEL GESY

Head of Video JOSHUA SEMOS

Dresser CHELSEA BREWER

Theatre Calgary is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and operates within the jurisdiction of the Canadian Theatre Agreement. Theatre Calgary employs technicians under a collective agreement with the I.A.T.S.E. Theatre Calgary is a resident company of Arts Commons, operating out of Arts Commons Max Bell Theatre.



CHARLES DICKENS



CHRISTMAS



ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY

GEOFFREY SIMON BROWN

30 NOVEMBER - 31 DECEMBER 2023

MAX BELL THEATRE

THEATRECALGARY.COM

THIS PRODUCTION IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE

CAST



KIT BENZ Miss Casewell

(they/them) Theatre Calgary debut. Kit is a clown, puppeteer, and physical theatre artist based in Moh'kins'tsis on Treaty 7 Territory. They are a graduate of the drama program at Bishop's University as well as the Professional Training Program at Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre. Kit also spent several glorious summers training in Pochinko clown at the Manitoulin Conservatory for Creation and Performance. Past work includes *The Jungle Book, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (ATP); *Yabber: A Musical Junk Tale* (Mudfoot

Theatre); Iniskim: Return of the Buffalo (Canadian Academy of Mask and Puppetry); All I Want for Christmas (Lunchbox Theatre).



TYRELL CREWS Sergeant Trotter

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: Noises Off, Much Ado About Nothing, Twelfth Night, One Man, Two Guvnors, A Christmas Carol, Our Town, Enron. Elsewhere: A Few Good Men (Drayton Entertainment); King Lear (Bard On The Beach); Disgraced (Alberta Theatre Projects); Pride and Prejudice (Theatre Calgary/National Arts Centre), Merchant Of Venice, Three Musketeers (Stratford Festival); Major Barbara (Theatre Calgary/American Conservatory Theater); The 39 Steps, Clue, Deathtrap (Vertigo Theatre); LUCKY in Waiting For Godot (Black Radish Theatre). Film and

Television: Horses of McBride (CTV), Hell On Wheels (AMC), Heartland (CBC), Wynonna Earp (Sci-Fi). Tyrell has been a nominee/recipient of Betty Mitchell Awards, and Calgary Critic's Choice Awards. To my loves, Adelaide and Cynthia.



NATASCHA GIRGIS Mrs. Boyle

For Theatre Calgary (selected): Humble Boy, Counsellor-At-Law, Sherlock Holmes, Evita, A Christmas Carol. Selected Theatre: In Wonderland, Drowning Girls (Cross Canada Tour), Around the World in 80 Days, Blue Light, Oliver Twist, Oleanna, Stone Angel (ATP); Sherlock Holmes, Ends of the Earth, Mystery of Edwin Drood (Vertigo); Dracula: The Bloody Truth (Vertigo/TNW); Nine Dragons (RMTC, Gateway, Vertigo); Becoming Dr. Ruth (TNW); The Gig (Aquarius); The Coyotes, Abundance, Beggar's Opera (Caravan Farm); A Thousand Splendid Suns (Grand); Titus Andronicus,

Richard III (Shakespeare Co.); What You're Missing (Chutzpah Festival); Communion, Palace of the End, Life Skills (Network); Heroine, Love (Northern Light); Humble Boy (Citadel); Speaking in Tongues (Shadow); Trespassers (Belfry, Vancouver Playhouse); Lion in the Streets (Sage); Blues in the Night, Complete Works Abridged (LBT); Suite Surrender, Unnecessary Farce, Fiddler on the Roof, The 39 Steps (Stage West); Amadeus, Macbeth, The Constant Wife (ATF); Speak (Globe); The Barber of Seville (Persephone); Lend Me a Tenor (Arts Club).

CAST



CHRISTIAN GOUTSIS Mr. Paravicini, Radio voice

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: Noises Off, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Timothy Findley's The Wars, The Cripple of Inishmaan, A Christmas Carol (2000, 2006-07), Macbeth, Counsellor-at-Law, Dangerous Corner, Candida. For 30 years, Christian has worked across Canada, the US, and abroad, as an actor, director, musician, writer, and teacher. He has worked extensively at major theatres all across Canada including; Theatre Calgary, ATP, Vertigo Theatre, Lunchbox Theatre, The Shakespeare Company, Hit and Myth, The Citadel Theatre,

Tarragon Theatre, Globe Theatre, The Belfry Theatre, Vancouver Playhouse, Neptune Theatre, Ground Zero, Stage West, TNB, and twice toured throughout the UK with Ghost River Theatre. He has been featured in numerous films and network television programs for CBC, Syfy, NBC, YTV, CBS, Hallmark, and many independent productions. He is a produced playwright, composer, teacher, and multiple Betty Mitchell Award winner. Christian is Voice Director and Casting Director at Six Degrees Music and Sound, as well as the Director of the Six Degrees Performance Academy.



VANESSA LETICIA JETTÉ Mollie Ralston

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Little Women, A Christmas Carol (2019, 2021), Hamlet (Shakespeare by the Bow). Vanessa is a Mexican-Canadian artist working in Calgary! You may have seen her on stages with companies such as Vertigo Theatre: The Extractionist, Clue, Sherlock Holmes and The Vanishing Thimble; Lunchbox Theatre Stage Two series: By the Book; Major Matt Mason: Premium Content; One Yellow Rabbit: BeautifulYoungArtists; and with The Shakespeare Company in Hamlet Frequency. She is forever grateful to her family and to her partner Chris

for all their support and she hopes you all enjoy the show.



ROBERT KLEIN Major Metcalf

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: A Christmas Carol (2011-18), King Lear, To Kill a Mockingbird. Elsewhere: The Extractionist, 12 Angry Men, Black Coffee, Blood Relations, I'll Be Back Before Midnight, A Party to Remember, And Then There Were None, Unexpected Guest (Vertigo); Shark Bite, Last Christmas, Hearts and Souls, Outside, Penetration, Ivanka, The Wild Guys (Lunchbox); Julius Caesar, Titus Andronicus, Hamlet (Shakespeare Company); King Kirby (Sage); Shakespeare's Rebel, King Lear (Bard on the Beach); The Outsider, Drinking Habits, Drinking Habits 2, Grease, Damn

Yankees, The Sound of Music (Stage West). Robert is truly delighted to be back with the fine people at Theatre Calgary!

CAST



MATTHEW MOONEY Christopher Wren

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: A Midsummer Night's Dream (Shakespeare on the Go). Born and raised in Glasgow, Scotland, Matthew travelled to Canada in January, 2023. He recently performed with Theatre Calgary's emerging artist programme, Shakespeare on the Go, playing as Bottom, Lysander and Moth in A Midsummer Night's Dream. He graduated in 2020 with a degree in Acting for Stage and Screen from Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Other Credits include: Still Game (BBC), The Mad Hatter's Circus (Tag Live); Harvey (New Celts Productions).

Matthew would especially like to thank the staff at Theatre Calgary who have supported him profoundly on his travels. As always, he sends love back to the people of Glasgow, as he attempts to make them proud. He would also like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Ralston (his maw and paw) who have made him everything he is, his adoring sister Sarah, and friends; Nicholas, Andrew, Moho, Iqbal, Michael and Dermot. He plans to keep up his attempts in this wonderful city he now calls home.



MIKE TAN Giles Ralston

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary: A Christmas Carol (2017-18, 2021). Mike is a Treaty 7-based theatre artist and photographer. He has worked as a cocreator in devised theatre creation ensembles with Downstage, Theatre Junction, and Ghost River Theatre; an acting ensemble member at the Banff Centre Playwrights Lab workshopping new plays from around the world; and as an actor at Vertigo Theatre: The Extractionist, Murder on the Orient Express; Alberta Theatre Projects: Constellations; Major Matt Mason Collective: Premium Content: Field Work Theatre: Parts & Labour:

and Jupiter Theatre: Frankenstein. Mike also works as a documentary photographer for arts and culture organizations (Calgary Folk Fest, Sled Island), events, and independent artists. He lives with his loves, Di, his son Aiden, and their cat babies, Frankie and Prismo.



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CRAIG HALL Director

(he/him) Theatre Calgary debut. Craig has worked across Canada as a director, designer and dramaturg for companies such as Vertigo Theatre, Lunchbox Theatre, The Shaw Festival, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Western Canada Theatre, Theatre Northwest, Gateway Theatre, Rumble Productions, the Arts Club Theatre, Greenthumb Theatre, Theatre Replacement, The Electric Company, Studio 58, Theatre SKAM, Radix Theatre, Nightswimming and Section 8 Productions. Craig served as Artistic Director of Vertigo Theatre from 2012-2022. He has received

several awards for his work including trophies for Outstanding Direction, Outstanding Set Design and Innovation. Craig is a graduate of Studio 58.



SCOTT REID Set & Video Design

(he/him) For Theatre Calgary (selected): Million Dollar Quartet, TC Returns, A Christmas Carol (lighting – 1999, set & projections – 2019, production design – 2020, 2021), Billy Elliot the Musical, Mom's The Word: For Crying Out Loud, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, A Raisin in the Sun. Elsewhere: Pride and Prejudice, Clue (Citadel); Alberta Kitchen Party, Stealing Sam, Disgraced, The New Canadian Curling Club (ATP); Misery, Clue, Murder on the Orient Express, Strangers on a Train, Dracula: The Bloody Truth (Vertigo); Macbeth, Eugene Onegin, South Pacific

(Calgary Opera); Our Canada, Class Acts (Alberta Ballet); Better Get Hit in Your Soul, Modern Vaudevillians, Juliet and Romeo (DJD). Scott has also designed for such companies as Quest Theatre, Lunchbox, and The Shakespeare Company. scottreiddesign.com



DEITRA KALYN Costume Design

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: A Christmas Carol (2019, 2021), Million Dollar Quartet, Noises Off, Shakespeare by the Bow (2012-2018, 2021), Blow Wind High Water, The Crucible, One Man, Two Guvnors, King Lear. Deitra is thrilled to be opening the season with this whodunit! She is an award-winning designer who holds a degree from ACAD and has been designing theatre and film costumes for various companies for nearly two decades. Her involvement as a costume designer has allowed her to play with some of the best people in the industry including projects

with Netflix, MGM, AMC, HBO, Joe, DDG, Vertigo, Theatre Calgary, ATP, and more. She is a member of IATSE 212 and ADC 659. Happy season opener everyone! Sending all my love to my brood of boys!



BETH KATES Lighting Design

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Little Women, The Importance of Being Earnest, The Merry Wives of Windsor (Shakespeare by the Bow), Ragtime: A Concert Performance, Steel Magnolias. Beth is a an award-winning theatre maker, lighting, set, projection, and mixed-reality designer. Her work has been seen on stages around the world for over 30 years, most recently at the Blyth Festival with James Reaney's rarely performed Donnelly Trilogy (adapted & directed by Gil Garratt). A leader in new forms of performance, she leads VR Performance creation workshops,

and co-created and directed *Bury The Wren*, a Virtual Reality / Live performance which will next be presented at the Festival of Live Digital Art (FOLDA). Her favourite production is her son, Aaron. www.playgroundstudios.ca



JOELYSA PANKANEA Sound Design & Composition

Theatre Calgary debut. Originally from Kenya, East Africa, Joelysa is a multi award-winning composer based in Vancouver BC. A seasoned professional with 25 years of experience in composition, musical direction, and sound design, her music has been featured in multiple theatre productions, short films, chamber orchestras, and choirs. In the realm of theatre, Joelysa has composed dozens of theatre shows, multiple large scale musicals, and sound designs. Recent credits: *Henry V* (Bard on the Beach); and *Rolling Hills* (Sunny Drake Productions and

Electric Company Theatre). Upcoming: *Transhumanist* (Musica Intima), and *Fire Never Dies* (Electric Company Theatre). www.joelysa.com



JANE MACFARLANE Voice & Dialect Coach

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Resident Voice Coach – More than 65 productions since 2000 including Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville, Forgiveness, Little Women, The Importance of Being Earnest, Million Dollar Quartet, Steel Magnolias, Admissions, The Louder We Get, Noises Off, Billy Elliot the Musical, The Scarlet Letter, Mary and Max – A New Musical, Honour Beat, 12 seasons of Shakespeare by the Bow and 15 years of A Christmas Carol. Additionally, Jane adapted and directed the 2022 Shakespeare on the Go production of The Merry Wives of Windsor.

She has worked for ATP, Vertigo Theatre, The Shakespeare Company, and various other stages across Alberta. Jane also coaches Voice and Presence through her business Voice Activated. She has taught Voice for the Actor and Acting at such institutions as York University, Harvard University, Southern Methodist University, MRU, UofA, and is currently on faculty in the Drama Division in the School of Creative & Performing Arts at UCalgary.



BRIANNA JOHNSTON Fight Director & Intimacy Coordinator

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Fight Direction – A Midsummer Night's Dream (2023); Assistant Fight Direction – Forgiveness, A Christmas Carol (2016); Acting – The Crucible, Romeo and Juliet (Shakespeare by the Bow 2013). Brianna is thrilled to be back at Theatre Calgary! Favourite fight direction credits include Teenage Dick, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (ATP); Richard III (TSC); Ministry of Grace (Making Treaty 7); The Extractionist (Vertigo); All I Want for Christmas (Lunchbox, Betty Mitchell nomination); GIANT (Ghost River, Betty Mitchell nomination); A Dinner Party (Bad

Knaps Collective). Favourite acting credits include *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (ATP); *The Tempest, The Three Musketeers* (TSC); *The Money Shot* (Ground Zero, Betty Mitchell nomination); and *The Bone House* (Apparition Theatre). Watch for her upcoming work in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* at Vertigo Theatre. Thanks and love to Logan for his love and support!



KENNEDY GREENE Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Jimmy Buffett's Escape to Margaritaville, Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill, A Christmas Carol (2020 &2021), TC Returns, The Louder We Get. Select credits include: Many Mothers, Seven Skies: Scenes for Tomorrow (Many Mothers Collective); Allergic to Water (Wee Witches/Inside Out Theatre); STRUCK (Ghost River Theatre); Naughty But Nice 9, LIVE! (Forte Musical Theatre Guild); Carmen, La Traviata, Rigoletto, Everest, Hansel & Gretel, The Brothers Grimm, Filumena, Turandot (Calgary Opera); Heaven, Calling Out Christmas!,

Flight Risk (Lunchbox); Kim's Convenience (Alberta Theatre Projects/ Arts Club); Assassinating Thompson (Lunchbox/Inside Out Theatre); All That Binds Us (Azimuth); There Goes the Bride, 80's Solid Gold 1 & 2, Spamalot, Chicago, Love Train, Gameshow (StageWest); The Thin Man, The Hollow (Vertigo); A Love Letter to Emily C, A Chitenge Story, The Tall Building (Handsome Alice). Kennedy is thrilled to be back at Theatre Calgary! She is a Calgary based Stage Manager, a self-proclaimed stationery nerd and theatre brat. When not working she can be found baking, crafting or playing board games.



MEREDITH JOHNSON Assistant Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Little Women, Iceland. Meredith is a Calgary based stage manager who has stage managed with Alberta Theatre Projects, Bad Knaps Theatre, Black Radish Theatre, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Calgary Young People's Theatre, Handsome Alice Theatre, Heritage Park, Inside Out Theatre, Lunchbox Theatre, Making Treaty 7, Major Matt Mason Collective, One Yellow Rabbit, The Shakespeare Company, Spontaneous Theatre/Arts Club Theatre, Quest Theatre, Verb Theatre and Vertigo Theatre. Meredith wishes to thank

the 3 coolest cats in town for wanting to share space with her on a daily basis.







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BRIANNA DIODATI Apprentice Stage Manager

(she/her) For Theatre Calgary: Forgiveness. Brianna is so happy to be back at Theatre Calgary! Other Stage Management Apprenticeships include 9 to 5: The Musical, Priscilla Queen of the Desert and One Hit Wonders (Stage West Theatre). Brianna has also worked as an actor across Canada and Spain. Select acting credits include Matilda (La Tourné Teatro - Spain), Carrie: The Musical (University of Lethbridge), and Nunsense The Musical (Music Box Productions). Big thanks to her family and friends for all their love and support.



CALEIGH CROW TC Mentors Program* - Assistant Director

(she/her) Theatre Calgary debut. Caleigh Crow is a queer Metis theatre artist from Mohkinstsis. She is the co-founder and Artistic Lead of Thumbs Up Good Work Theatre. Previous playwriting topics include: a talking crow and a grocery clerk, the mass coronal ejection of 1859, the Antifa Supersoldier, the intersection between 12th century Franciscan nuns and Britney Spears, remote viewing, witch revenge, SETI and a landlord musical. Most recently she directed *Antigone Lives* for WhyNot Theatre and TMU's *RiserX* project. She is also a sometime actor.



LARA SCHMITZ TC Mentors Program* - Voice & Dialect

For Theatre Calgary: *Iceland, Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare by the Bow 2013). Lara is a local actor, educator, and writer. As an actor, Lara's most recent credits include *The Ministry of Grace* (Making Treaty 7, Belfry Theatre); and *Murder on the Orient Express* (Vertigo Theatre). Lara is excited to delve into voice and dialect coaching to further explore how multifaceted and fascinating voice work is! Thanks to Theatre Calgary and Jane for this opportunity.

*TC Mentors participants are generously supported by the RBC Emerging Artist Program.

SPECIAL THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Costume Collective

AGATHA CHRISTIE AND THE MOUSETRAP



Agatha Christie

orn on September 15th, 1890, in Torquay (England), Agatha Christie was homeschooled, an unusual option in that era, teaching herself to read at age 5, having her first publication at age 11 of a poem in a local magazine, and writing her first short story at age 18 to stave off boredom while in bed with influenza.

Christie's writing career started in earnest when Agatha decided to write a detective story, after her sister Madge bet she couldn't write a good one. Her first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, introduced Hercule Poirot. However once completed, Agatha couldn't find a publisher. Finally in 1919, publisher John Lane of

The Bodley Head, the seventh to have received the manuscript, accepted *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* and contracted Agatha to write five more books. A mystery writer was born.

In 1947, Agatha was approached by the BBC to write a radio play for the 80th birthday of Queen Mary, who was an avid admirer of her work. The result was *Three Blind Mice*, which



A young Agatha Christie

ultimately became *The Mousetrap*. The world's longest running play opened in October 1952 in Nottingham, before transferring to the Ambassadors Theatre in the West End in November with Richard Attenborough and Sheila Sim as the stars. In September 1956, it became the longest running play in British history. And in 1974, it moved to the St Martins Theatre where it has been ever since (save for an enforced hiatus during the corona virus pandemic).

Agatha Christie has penned 66 detective novels and 14 short story collections, as well as the world's longest-running play. Her books have sold over a billion copies in the English language and a billion in translation. Agatha Christie became, and remains, the best-selling novelist of all time.

Sampled from About Christie (agathachristie.com)



Bust of Agatha Christie in Torquay, UK



The Mousetrap at St Martins Theatre, 2023

FUN FACTS ABOUT AGATHA CHRISTIE

Writing & Life

- When she published The Mysterious Affair at Styles, she was forced to use the spelling "coco" instead of "cocoa" due to the insistence of an editor. As an inexperienced novelist, she capitulated, but she received many letters from acquaintances noting the "coco" spelling and commenting that she was "never a good speller." Christie thought this was "most unfair."
- The Mysterious Affair at Styles earned her the princely sum of £25.
- The murderer's application of poison, in The Mysterious Affair at Styles, was so
 well described, that when the book was eventually published Agatha received an
 unprecedented honour for a writer of fiction a review in the Pharmaceutical Journal.
- She is the only crime writer to have created two equally famous and much-loved characters - Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple.
- Miss Marple was inspired by her maternal grandmother and her friends.
- When she first started writing poetry in her youth, she wrote poems inspired by the commedia dell'arte, and the figures Harlequin and Columbine. These helped inspire her Mr. Quin tales later in her career.
- She wrote six semi-autobiographical, bitter-sweet novels under the pseudonym Mary Westmacott. The fact that she was the author remained a secret for almost 20 years.
- In 1922, during a trip around the world, Christie and first husband, Archibald, tried surfing in Muizenberg, South Africa. She enjoyed it so much, she would do it again on that trip in Honolulu, Hawaii.
- When Penguin paperbacks were launched in 1935
 The Mysterious Affair at Styles was one of the first 10 titles.



Agatha Christie surfing, 1922

- She was the first crime writer to have 100,000 copies of ten of her titles published by Penguin on the same day in 1948 - A Penguin Million.
- In 1954 she was the recipient of the first ever Grandmaster Award from the Mystery Writers of America.
- She accepted the Presidency of the famous "Detection Club", a group of celebrated British mystery writers, in 1958 on the strict understanding that she would never have to make a speech, as she was painfully shy.
- When he died, Hercule Poirot was given a full-page obituary in *The New York Times*.
- Christie considered retiring at the age of seventy-five, but her books were selling so
 well that she decided to keep writing for at least another five years and wound up
 writing up until about a year before she passed away at age eighty-six.
- At the Bouchercon World Mystery Convention in May 2000, she was named Mystery Writer of the Century and the Poirot books Mystery Series of the Century.
- She wrote over 30 plays, of which the most famous, *The Mousetrap*, is the longest running play in the world, having debuted in 1952.

FUN FACTS ABOUT AGATHA CHRISTIE (...continued)

Theatre

- She is the only female dramatist ever to have had three plays running simultaneously in London's West End.
- She is the only crime novelist to achieve equal and international fame as a dramatist.
- The Mousetrap was developed from the radio play Three Blind Mice, which was written
 at the request of Queen Mary (grandmother of Queen Elizabeth II) for her birthday.
- The original programme for *The Mousetrap* had no title on the cover just a mousetrap on a splash of red.
- Inmates at Wormwood Scrubs prison in London were once treated to a performance of *The Mousetrap* with the West End cast. During the play, two prisoners escaped.
- Of her own work her favourite play was Witness for the Prosecution.
- Christie kept such a low profile that she was not recognized at the Witness for the Prosecution stage play premiere party and was turned away at the door. She was too shy to identify herself and demand access.
- Christie won an Edgar Award for Best Play for *The Witness for the Prosecution*.
- Agatha Christie's name has appeared every day for the last 53 years in every newspaper with a West End theatre listing. Apart from during lockdown in 2020!
- On the day she died the West End theatres dimmed their lights for one hour.

These facts were compiled by Agatha Christie experts John Curran and Chris Chan, alongside Agatha Christie Ltd.



Theatre Calgary wishes to express our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of Buddy Victor.

Buddy, along with Al Osten, has enriched the lives of Albertans and Canadians through health, recreation, social services and arts initiatives. His contributions to Theatre Calgary through the Al Osten & Buddy Victor Legacy Fund ensures that musicals, and musical theatre artists, will continue to be showcased on our stage.

We send our love to Al, all of Buddy's family, and all those whom he touched with his generosity, gift of song, and kindness.

> BUDDY VICTOR 1930 - 2023



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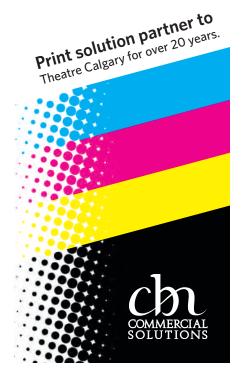
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