

Play Reading 2018-2019
Season 30

Musical

Circle One

1. Chicago
2. Ghost

Comedy

Circle Two

1. The Game's Afoot
2. There Goes the Bride
3. Calendar Girls
4. A Little Murder Never Hurt Anybody

Drama/Mystery-

Circle One

1. August: Osage County
2. Crimes of the Heart
3. The Mousetrap

Musical

Chicago

In roaring twenties Chicago, chorine Roxie Hart murders a faithless lover and convinces her hapless husband, Amos, to take the rap...until he finds out he's been duped and turns on Roxie. Convicted and sent to death row, Roxie and another "Merry Murderess," Velma Kelly, vie for the spotlight and the headlines, ultimately joining forces in search of the "American Dream": fame, fortune, and acquittal. This sharp-edged satire features a dazzling score that sparked immortal staging by Bob Fosse.

Ghost

Adapted from the hit film by its Academy Award-winning screenwriter, Bruce Joel Rubin, *Ghost the Musical* follows Sam and Molly, a young couple whose connection takes a shocking turn after Sam's untimely death. Trapped between two worlds, Sam refuses to leave Molly when he learns she is in grave danger. Desperate to communicate with her, he turns to a storefront psychic, Oda Mae Brown, who helps him protect Molly and avenge his death.

Comedy

The Game's Afoot

It is December 1936, and Broadway star William Gillette, admired the world over for his leading role in the play *Sherlock Holmes*, has invited his fellow cast members to his Connecticut castle for a weekend of revelry. But when one of the guests is stabbed to death, the festivities in this isolated house of tricks and mirrors quickly turn dangerous. It is then up to Gillette himself, as he assumes the persona of his beloved Holmes, to track down the killer before the next victim appears. The danger and hilarity are non-stop in this glittering whodunit set during the Christmas holidays.

There Goes the Bride

An extremely funny play about a young girl's forthcoming marriage and attitudes about premarital sex. Excerpts from the London reviews and the critics reaction can best describe this farce.

Calendar Girls

When Annie's husband John dies of leukaemia, she and best friend Chris resolve to raise money for a new settee in the local hospital waiting room. They manage to persuade four fellow WI members to pose nude with them for an "alternative" calendar, with a little help from hospital porter and amateur photographer Lawrence. The news of the women's charitable venture spreads like wildfire, and hordes of press soon descend on the small village of Knapeley in the Yorkshire Dales. The calendar is a success, but Chris and Annie's friendship is put to the test under the strain of their new-found fame. Based on the true story of eleven WI members who posed nude for a calendar to raise money for the Leukaemia Research Fund, Calendar Girls opened at the Chichester Festival Theatre and has since become the fastest selling play in British theatre history.

A Little Murder Never Hurt Anybody

This six-character comedy is a spoof of and love letter to the screwball comedies of the 1930s and to stage mysteries in general. It is a one-set, two-act piece featuring witty dialogue and slapstick comedy. The play opens with the rich, bored Matthew promising to kill his rich, bored wife Julia so he can become a jet setter like his friend who recently lost his wife. Julia, who's always about three steps ahead of him, plays along. And so the game begins - a hilarious year-long match of wits and the witless. During the year the play takes place, there are several mysterious deaths that occur on the grounds of the family estate, a butler who is not what he seems, a detective who can't buy a clue, and two innocents (sort of) caught in the hilarity as they plan their wedding. While Julia cleverly dodges Matthew's devious murder attempts, the Perry friends and staff are dying off mysteriously. It seems Matthew is successful in murdering everyone but Julia. As the bodies fall, dim-witted daughter Bunny contemplates calling off her wedding to

unwitting Donald since all the intended gift-bearing guests are dying. Enter Detective Plotnik - a Sam Spade reincarnation who suspects everyone, but hasn't a clue. That is, not until Donald stumbles upon Julia and gentlemanly butler Buttram in what Donald mistakenly perceives as a compromising situation. Donald jumps to the conclusion that Julia is the murderer - trying to murder Matthew! It ends in a nice bang and with a bit of a message about the importance of love.

Drama/Mystery

August: Osage County

A vanished father. A pill-popping mother. Three sisters harboring shady little secrets. When the large Weston family unexpectedly reunites after Dad disappears, their Oklahoman family homestead explodes in a maelstrom of repressed truths and unsettling secrets. Mix in Violet, the drugged-up, scathingly acidic matriarch, and you've got a major new play that unflinchingly—and uproariously—exposes the dark side of the Midwestern American family.

Crimes of the Heart

The scene is Hazlehurst, Mississippi, where the three Magrath sisters have gathered to await news of the family patriarch, their grandfather, who is living out his last hours in the local hospital. Lenny, the oldest sister, is unmarried at thirty and facing diminishing marital prospects; Meg, the middle sister, who quickly outgrew Hazlehurst, is back after a failed singing career on the West Coast; while Babe, the youngest, is out on bail after having shot her husband in the stomach. Their troubles, grave and yet, somehow, hilarious, are highlighted by their priggish cousin, Chick, and by the awkward young lawyer who tries to keep Babe out of jail while helpless not to fall in love with her. In the end the play is the story of how its young characters escape the past to seize the future—but the telling is so true and touching and

consistently hilarious that it will linger in the mind long after the curtain has descended.

The Mousetrap

A group of strangers is stranded in a boarding house during a snow storm, one of whom is a murderer. The suspects include the newly married couple who run the house, and the suspicions in their minds nearly wreck their perfect marriage. Others are a spinster with a curious background, an architect who seems better equipped to be a chef, a retired Army major, a strange little man who claims his car has overturned in a drift, and a jurist who makes life miserable for everyone. Into their midst comes a policeman, traveling on skis. He no sooner arrives, when the jurist is killed. Two down, and one to go. To get to the rationale of the murderer's pattern, the policeman probes the background of everyone present, and rattles a lot of skeletons. Another famous Agatha Christie switch finish! Chalk up another superb intrigue for the foremost mystery writer of her time.