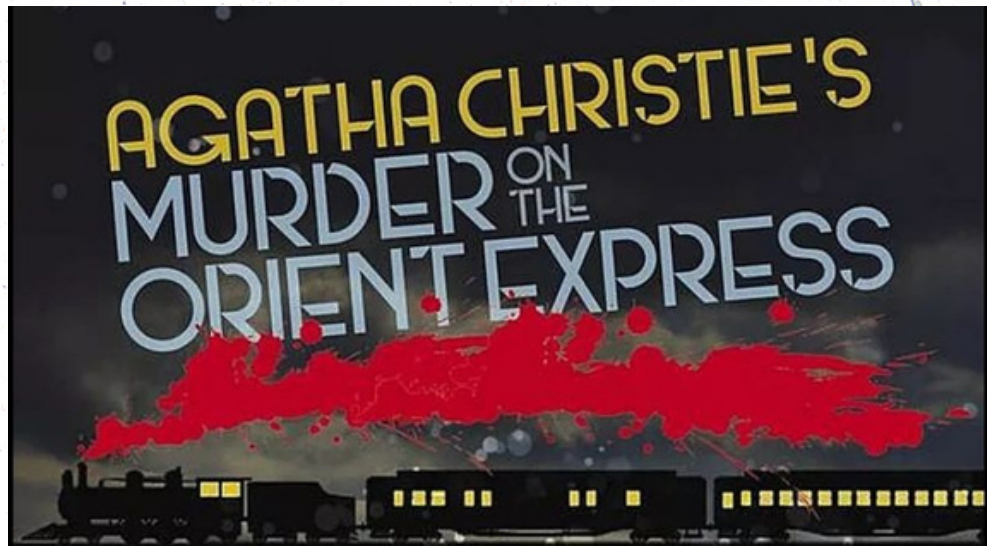


University of Wisconsin - La Crosse
Department of Theatre and Dance



Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express

Adapted for the Stage by Ken Ludwig

Director	Greg Parmeter
Scenic Designer	Mandy Kolbe
Costume & Makeup Designer	Michelle Collyar
Lighting Designer	Tracy Joe*
Sound Designer	Brodyn Byington*
Technical Director	Megan Morey
Stage Manager	Laura Felde*
Dramaturgs	Val Fish* & Tracie Hodgdon*

*Indicates Student Designer/Manager

October 14-15 & 20-22, 2022 at 7:30 p.m.
October 16 & 23, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.

Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express is presented by arrangement
with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.
www.concordtheatricals.com

Production Credits

Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*, adapted by Ken Ludwig, was originally staged by McCarter Theater Center, Princeton, NJ
Emily Mann, Artistic Director; Timothy J. Shields, Managing Director. The production subsequently transferred to Hartford Stage, Hartford, CT
Darko Tresnjak, Artistic Director; Michael Stotts, Managing Director

Playwright Biography

Ken Ludwig has had six shows on Broadway, seven in London's West End, and many of his works have become a standard part of the American repertoire. His 28 plays and musicals have been performed in over 30 countries in more than 20 languages and are produced throughout the United States every night of the year.

Lend Me a Tenor won two Tony Awards and was called "one of the classic comedies of the 20th century by The Washington Post. *Crazy For You* was on Broadway for five years and won the Tony and Olivier Awards for Best Musical.

In addition, he has won the Edgar Award for Best Mystery of the Year, two Laurence Olivier Awards, two Helen Hayes Awards, and the Edwin Forrest Award for Contributions to the American Theater. His plays have starred, among others, Alec Baldwin, Carol Burnett, Tony Shaloub, Joan Collins, and Hal Holbrook.

His stage version of *Murder on the Orient Express* was written expressly at the request of the Agatha Christie Estate, and his latest play, *Dear Jack, Dear Louise*, won the 2020 Charles MacArthur Award for Best New Play of the Year and is optioned for Broadway.

His book *How To Teach Your Children Shakespeare*, published by Penguin Random House, won the Falstaff Award for Best Shakespeare Book of the Year, and his essays are published in the Yale Review.

He is a graduate of Harvard and Cambridge and is a frequent guest speaker for groups as varied as The Oxford-Cambridge Society, The Jane Austen Society of North America, The Folger Shakespeare Library, and The Baker Street Irregulars.

For more information, see his website at www.kenludwig.com.

Cast

Hercule Poirot.....Adam Bloom
Monsieur Bouc.....Will Nysse
Mary Debenham.....Macy Ortloff
Hector Macqueen.....Isaac Gonzales
Michel the Conductor.....Paige Huling
Princess Dragomiroff.....Tracie Hodgdon
Greta Ohlsson.....Kaitlyn Pyburn
Countess Andrenyi.....Ella Mertes
Helen Hubbard.....Anna Kral
Colonel Arbuthnot.....Erik Berg
Samuel Ratchett.....Louden Ferguson
Head Waiter.....Abby Muma

There will be a 10-minute intermission.

A sound effect of a gun shot will be used during the production.

Biographies

Kevin Amerling (Asst. Lighting Designer)--Kevin is excited to team up with Tracy Joe to design the lighting for *Murder on the Orient Express*. He is a Business Management and Administration major with a minor in Theater Technical Design. Kevin has work as master electrician, light crew, and sound board operator for several shows. Kevin would like to thank Joe Anderson for giving him a passing grade in Theatre Rendering.

Erik Berg (Colonel Arbuthnot)--Erik is in his Senior year here at UWL, and is stoked, enlivened, and most certainly full of beans to be back on stage again this semester! As a proud La Crosse native, Erik has had the opportunity to spread his joy through performance across much of the area! Past roles include Orson Welles (*War of the Worlds*), a Newsie (LCT's *Newsies!*), and Ladislav Sipos (*She Loves Me*). Erik is playing Charles Dickens in UWL's upcoming *A Christmas Carol*. He thanks his family and friends for their support, and hopes everyone immerses themselves in *Orient Express!*

Adam Bloom (Hercule Poirot)--Adam is ecstatic to be starring in this role on the Toland stage! A senior Musical Theatre major last seen in *She Loves Me*, he is eager to take on the challenge this show brings. He would like to thank his friends and family for their support. Enjoy the show!

Brodyn Byington (Sound Designer)--Brodyn is a junior with a Design/Tech emphasis and is excited to be the sound designer for *Murder on the Orient Express*! He previously sound designed *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* and assistant lighting designed *The Revolutionists*. He designed lights for *Avenue Q* and *The Laramie Project* at the La Crosse Community Theatre. He would like to thank his family and friends for their constant support.

Michelle Collyar (Costume Designer)--With an MFA in design, Michelle manages the costume shop and teaches costume technology. Having designed/constructed costumes and dancewear for regional and academic theatres, Michelle recently worked on two television series filmed in Canada: *Let's Get Physical* starring Jane Seymour and *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, a mock news series.

Laura Felde (Stage Manager)--Laura is a senior double majoring in Stage Management and Business Management. *Murder on the Orient Express* is her first Toland show! She recently stage managed and sound designed *Spotlight* and assistant stage managed *Love/Sick*. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support! Enjoy the show!

Louden Ferguson (Samuel Ratchett)--Louden is a senior double majoring in Archaeology and Theatre Performance. They are excited for the opportunity to take part in *Murder on the Orient Express* this fall, and hope you enjoy the show. Special thanks to friends and family for your continued support.

Val Fish (Dramaturg)--Val is thrilled to death to be doing her first-ever dramaturgy for this show! She is a Performance major with a Creative Writing minor. She previously worked on *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* and *The Revolutionists*. Special thanks to friends and family for putting up with the constant stream of weird tidbits of information about this show and a shout out to all of the vending machines on campus for their constant supply of caffeinated beverages.

Sage Goetsch (Asst. Stage Manager)--Sage is a Stage Management major and is super excited to be working on another UWL production! He previously worked on *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* as an Assistant Stage Manager. He would like to thank his friends and partners for always supporting him. And finally, he hopes you enjoy the show!!

Isaac Gonzeles (Hector Macqueen)--Isaac is a History major with a Theatre Performance minor. He started participating in theatre late in high school and is still trying to figure out what to do after college.

Anna Halvorsen (Asst. Stage Manager)--Anna is a junior majoring in Performance and minoring in Stage Management. She was seen in the cast of *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* and *Severe Clear* and as an assistant stage manager for *The Revolutionists* last year. She thanks her friends and family for their encouragement and motivation and the cast and crew for being such a wonderful community!

Tracie Hodgdon (Princess Dragomiroff/Dramaturg)--Tracie is excited to finally be a university senior and to start this year on stage with the incredible cast of *Murder on the Orient Express*. She was seen last spring as Pellegrina in *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*. Tracie has two awesome kids, Charu (Chazz) and Dutch and is in the process of forming her own theatre production company.

Paige Huling (Michel the Conductor)--Paige is so excited to be in her first production at UW-La Crosse! She is a freshmen, and undecided with a passion for theatre. Some of her most recent shows have been *Wizard of Oz* as the Lion (CastleCo. Theatre), and *Radium Girls* as Kathryn (FHS theatre department).

August Jennings (Asst. Scenic Designer)--August is a third-year double major in Theatre Design/Tech and Art, and he's excited to be working on another UWL show! His most recent adventures include working as a scenic/props designer at Broadway Theatre in De Pere, building everything from swamps to dragons to minotaurs for *Xanadu* and *Shrek the Musical*. He was also an assistant technical director for *She Loves Me* last semester. He'd like to thank his friends and family for supporting his endeavors, and his best friend Laura Cassidy, for coming to every show he works on.

Tracy Joe (Lighting Designer)--Tracy is ecstatic for the opportunity to work on *Murder on The Orient Express* as her first design in Toland! She is a senior double majoring in Theatre Design/Tech and Biology. Previous productions include *Spotlight* (Lighting Designer) and *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* (Assistant Lighting Designer). She would like to thank her family and friends for their endless support.

Sam Kallis (Asst. Technical Director)--Sam is a 4th year student at UWL. He has been working in the scene shop as either a volunteer or staff member since his freshman year. This is Sam's first full year as a Technical Theater major and first production role in the department outside of scene shop carpentry. He is excited to see what this year and show has in store for him.

Mandy Kolbe (Scenic Designer)--Mandy earned her MFA in scenic and lighting design from Ohio State University. She has designed over 50 shows at UWL including *A Christmas Carol*, *Eleemosynary*, *26 Pebbles*, *Hair*, *Twelfth Night*, *Urinetown*, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, and many more. She has also designed for the Ashland Theatre, Arrow Rock Lyceum Theatre, The Brick, and the Hudson Guild.

Anna Kral (Helen Hubbard)--Anna is a senior at UWL. She has most recently graced the Toland stage in the musical production of *She Loves Me* and as Olympe de Gouges in *The Revolutionists*. Anna is an avid Agatha Christie fan and is extremely excited to bring to life one of her favorite mysteries!

Noah Mastaglio (Asst. Director)--This will be Noah's final show at UWL. Having been a part of numerous productions and pushing through the years of COVID, he is stoked to finally be able to assistant direct! Tremendous thanks to the department, his peers, and family for withstanding and supporting him through these last 4 years.

Talia Mentjes (Asst. Scenic Designer)--Talia is currently completing their senior year as a double major in Theatre Design and the Visual Arts. They have recently gotten the opportunity to work on several UWL shows like *Love/Sick* as the head costume designer, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* as a property design assistant, *She Loves Me* in the scenic paint shop, and *War of Worlds* as the assistant scenic designer. They want to personally thank their family and friends for supporting them and pushing them to pursue their dreams.

Ella Mertes (Countess Andrenyi)--Ella is a sophomore and this is her first show at UWL! She has done theatre throughout high school and does some on-screen acting as well. She is majoring in Theater Performance and minoring in Psychology. She hopes you enjoy the show and thanks you all for coming!

Julia Milne (Props Designer)--Julia is a junior majoring in Stage Management and double minoring in Arts Administration and Theatre Design/Tech. Previous UWL productions she has worked on include *War of the Worlds*, *Songs for A New World*, *Severe Clear*, *The Revolutionists*, and *Spotlight*. Julia is very grateful for the opportunity to design props for this show. She would like to thank her friends, family, and UWL faculty for their continued love and support.

Megan Morey (Technical Director)--Originally from Missoula, MT, Megan holds a BA in Design/Technical Theatre (Scenic and Costume Design) from Washington University in St. Louis, and an MFA in Technical Direction from the University of Nevada – Las Vegas. She worked professionally as the Technical Director for the Great River Shakespeare Festival in Winona, MN for 7 years.

Abby Muma (Head Waiter)--Abby is excited to be joining the cast of *Murder on the Orient Express*, their first time on stage in college! Their previous shows include *Pippin*, *A Year with Frog and Toad*, and *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*. They hope you enjoy the show!

Will Nysse (Monsieur)--This is Will's first performance at UWL, and he is thrilled to be involved in bringing *Murder on the Orient Express* to life as Monsieur Bouc. Enjoy the show!

Macy Ortloff (Mary Debenham)--Macy is thrilled to be performing in her first production at UWL. She is from Greendale WI, and has performed in many productions at Greendale High School including: *Newsies*, *Clue*, and *Oliver*! She would like to thank her family and friends for supporting her and hopes you enjoy the show!

Greg Parmeter (Director)--Greg teaches voice, movement, and acting at UWL. He earned his MFA in Acting from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and spent seasons with the Nebraska Rep, Virginia Shakespeare Festival, Hampstead Stage Company, and Northern Fort Repertory. Greg was the Artistic Director at La Crosse Community Theatre where he directed the regional premiers of *Les Miserables* and *Mary Poppins* as well as the national community theatre premier of *Billy Elliot the Musical*.

Kaitlyn Pyburn (Greta Ohlsson)--This is Kaitlyn's first show with the UWL Theater Department! She is super excited to start her acting journey here and hopes you all enjoy the show!

Production Team

Asst. Director.....Noah Mastaglio
Asst. Stage Managers.....Sage Goetsch,
Anna Halvorsen
Asst. Scenic Designers.....August Jennings,
Talia Mentjes
Asst. Lighting Designer.....Kevin Amerling
Asst. Technical DirectorSam Kallis
Master Electrician.....Dana Leis
Dialect Coaches.....Nic Barilar, Greg Parmeter
Intimacy Director.....Mary Leonard
Production Manager.....Laurie Kinckman
Costume Shop Manager.....Michelle Collyar
Scene Shop Supervisor.....Megan Morey
Light Board Operator.....Ellie Burns
Sound Board Operator.....Grace Howard
Video Operator.....Molly Eelman
Run Crew.....Natalie Edge, Julien Goldstein,
Julia Huske, Alexis Marie Jacobs,
Phoenix Wilkinson
Costume Run Crew.....Kendra Crotteau,
Katie Glazer (Head), Anikke Grothaus,
Hailey Mleczko, Leah Parnitzke,
Tianna Sackett, Benjamin Skramstad
Light/Sound Shop Staff.....Brodyn Byington,
Tracy Joe, Dana Leis, Linnea Lerwick
Light Hang/Focus Crew.....Marty Bond,
Calix Denny, Madison Ehler, Garrett Fisher,
Tanor Gehrke, Kaj Jensen, Mason Maren,
Katelyn Myers, Sydney Nguyen,
Brayden Rosenow, Alivia Seibel,
Bridget Torud, Gabby Zinnel
Publicity Crew.....Allison Fladhammer,
Jack Hehli, Kamryn Schueller
Props/Paint Staff.....Laura Felde, August Jennings,
Carson Kreger, Talia Mentjes, Jess Miller
Props/Paint Crew.....Katriana Wolf
Costume Shop Staff.....Jake Gesteland,
Sage Goetsch, Tracie Hodgdon,
Linnea Lerwick, Irene Swain
Costume Shop Crew....Brevin Kruse, Madie Brunner,
Bryan Enriquez, Zoey Goeckerman,
Paige Langreder, Maggie Pelli, Allison Verhasselt

Scene Shop Staff.....Adam Bloom,
Brodyn Byington, August Jennings, Sam Kallis
Scene Shop Crew.....Seren Adams,
Annaleece Anibas, Sarah Belland, Adler Bowe,
Lynzeekay Fox, Joshua Galvin, Abigale Hartwig,
Eli Haufle, Isaiah Heimer, Abigail Jahn, Kaitlin
Kalafice, Jill Knudsen, Blake Laufenberg, Elizabeth
Meurer, Erin Niven, Luke Norland, Ireland Olstad,
Holly Rands, Delaney Ruhland, Samantha Schultz,
Anival Valtierrez Martinez, Aaron Van Nuland,
Kylee Vandengenberg, Zach Vinson
Front of House.....Max Byington,
Katelyn Graf, Madeline Grethel,
Genevieve Payne, Iversin Polebitski,
Elizabeth Scheerer, Haley Schwind
Poster Design/Cast Photos.....Joe Anderson
House Manager.....Anna Montgomery
Box Office.....Caitlin Elenteny, Chloe Hart,
Paige Verbsky
Lobby Display.....Val Fish, Tracie Hodgdon

Voice Over Cast

Daisy Armstrong.....Matilda Parmeter
Mother.....Caitlyn Bland
Father.....Noah Mastaglio
Nanny.....Emily Riley
Radio Operator.....Anna Halvorsen



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Director's Notes

“It was a dark and stormy night...”

The most famous and mocked opening line in all of fiction. A joke, a cliché, what *Writer's Digest* once called “the literary posterchild for bad story starters.” But this line promises the most delicious idea for the reader: possibility. A dark night, torrential rain, a secluded mansion, an eccentric group of guests isolated by some act of God, and, oh-so-inevitably, oh-so-shockingly, and oh-so-thrillingly: a murder. Book or movie: grab the popcorn, curl up on the couch, and dive in.

I love murder mysteries. *Clue* (the movie and game) was and is one of my favorites. It's the type of mystery that most captures my imagination. One with specific rules: no cell-phones, no televisions, no internet, no modern trappings aside from those my great-grandparents would have found familiar. I want hunting tweeds and dinner jackets, ball gowns and butlers. If I can get the proverbial great detective and their slightly dim sidekick/biographer, all the better. Oh...and a dark and stormy night, of course.

We have Agatha Christie to thank for this particular prototype. Dame Agatha became the best-selling author in history while reinventing the genre pioneered by Poe, Collins, and Doyle. In what I consider the golden trio of her works: *And Then There Were None*, *The Mousetrap*, and tonight's main event, *Murder on the Orient Express*, she perfected the “locked-room” mystery by making it a “locked location.” The isolation of the three settings: a remote island in a storm, a country manor cut off by a blizzard, and a luxury train stuck between stations by a snow drift, blocks the characters from fleeing for safety. Instead of a “who-dunnit” we now have a “who's-gonna'-survive-it?” Anyone could be the killer, and anyone could be next. The stakes are high, the tension is thick, and all the characters can do is hold out ‘til morning.

Thanks for coming and sharing the work of our students and staff. Here's hoping the night you see this is indeed dark and stormy (or at least rainy if you're at a matinee).

Dramaturg Notes

Val Fish and Tracie Hodgdon

We expect you're wondering why we've gathered you here today. Agatha Christie was one of the most prolific mystery authors, and among her most popular characters is Detective Hercule Poirot, one of whose stories you will witness today. Many of her stories have been adapted for the stage, film, and television. She also wrote *The Mousetrap*, the longest running stage play ever – with the stipulation that there will be no film created of that script until it closes on London's West End. The current movie *See How They Run* is the closest you can get to seeing it on film.

This adaptation by Ken Ludwig was specifically commissioned by the Agatha Christie Foundation.

While not based on real event, *Murder on the Orient Express* was inspired by the real Venice-Simplon Orient Express railway train, a real event of that train being snowbound in Turkey, and the kidnapping of Charles Lindberg's baby in 1928.

See if you can figure out "who done it!"

Special Thanks

La Crosse Community Theatre
Viterbo Theatre Department
Dublin Square Irish Pub & Eatery
La Crosse Distilling Co.
The Wisco
Old Fashion Supper Club



The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF)

Started in 1969 by Roger L. Stevens, the Kennedy Center's founding chairman, the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) is a national theater program involving 18,000 students from colleges and universities nationwide which has served as a catalyst in improving the quality of college theater in the United States. The KCACTF has grown into a network of more than 600 academic institutions throughout the country, where theater departments and student artists showcase their work and receive outside assessment by KCACTF respondents.

The goals of the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival are: to encourage, recognize, and celebrate the finest and most diverse work produced in university and college theater programs; to provide opportunities for participants to develop their theater skills and insight; and achieve professionalism; to improve the quality of college and university theater in America; to encourage colleges and universities to give distinguished productions of new plays, especially those written by students; the classics, revitalized or newly conceived; and experimental works.

Through state, regional, and national festivals, KCACTF participants celebrate the creative process, see one another's work, and share experiences and insights within the community of theater artists.

The KCACTF honors excellence of overall production and offers student artists individual recognition through awards and scholarships in playwriting, acting, criticism, directing, and design. The KCACTF is a year-round program in eight geographic regions in the United States. Regional activities are coordinated through eight KCACTF regional chairs and eight KCACTF playwriting awards chairs. With funding and administrative support from the Kennedy Center, the regional chair coordinates with the Co-Managers of KCACTF all aspects of the adjudication of productions on the local and regional level and supervises regional-level KCACTF award competitions. The playwriting chair works with schools that have entered new and student-written plays by providing expertise in the development of new scripts--assessment specifically designed for a developing play--and by providing information on the numerous playwriting awards offered.

In January and February of each year, regional festivals showcase the finest of each region's entered productions and offer a variety of activities, including workshops, symposia, and regional-level award programs. Regional festival productions are judged by a panel of three judges selected by the Kennedy Center and the KCACTF national committee. These judges in consultation with the Artistic Director select four to six of the best and most diverse regional festival productions to be showcased in the spring at the annual noncompetitive national festival at the Kennedy Center, all expenses paid.

Since its inception, KCACTF has given more than 400,000 college theater students the opportunity to have their work critiqued, improve their dramatic skills and receive national recognition for excellence. More than 16 million theatergoers have attended approximately 10,000 festival productions nationwide.

Upcoming Events

