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By John Bishop

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 By Jesse Jones, Nicholas Hope and Jamie Wooten Sept. 28-Oct. 9, 2022	 By Tom Mads Nov. 30 - Dec 11, 2022	 By Sean Grennan February 15-26, 2023	 By John Bishop April 12-23, 2023	 by Alfred Uhry June 14-25, 2023
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A Message from the Director

It's 1942. War is raging in two world theaters. But the theaters of Broadway are more concerned with the unsolved case of the Broadway slasher who killed three chorus girls two years ago. These are the inspiring events of John Bishops *The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*. And three of my favorite theatrical elements when choosing a play to direct: a comedy, a murder mystery, and a period piece all rolled into one. What more could you ask for?

The play enjoyed a long and critically hailed run both on and Off-Broadway when it premiered in 1987. But thirty five years later it still holds up by poking antic fun at the more ridiculous aspects of "show biz" and the corny thrillers of Hollywood's heyday. The Village Voice said, "Bishop gives us a nakedly silly and relentlessly convoluted murder-mystery plot with twist piled on twist till you have to give way and start laughing at the silliness."

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BJ Hughes
 Director

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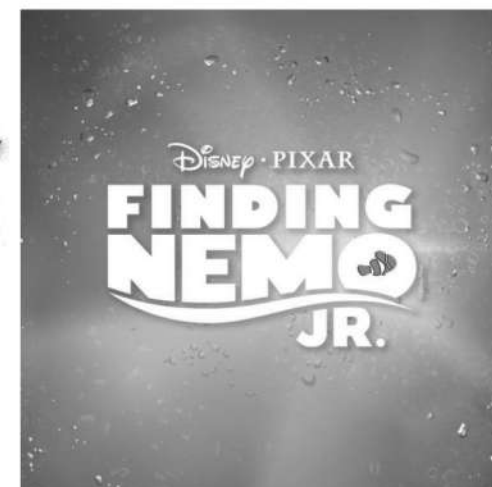
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MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS of 1940

By John Bishop

Director BJ Hughes
Stage Manager Kelsey Knight
Scenic Designer BJ Hughes
Master Carpenter Frank Dansby
Costume Design Curtis Brown
Lighting Design and Technician Nate Barnes
Sound Design Curtis Brown
Audio Technician Keith Potter
Production Assistant Janice Aiken
Set Construction Shirley Beall, Rachel Burdette,
Frank Dansby, BJ Hughes, Dan Jennings,
Alan Manno, Keith Potter, Tony Seaman,
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"THE MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS OF 1940" is presented by
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Dramatists Play Service collection. (www.dramatists.com)

Produced on Broadway by Bill Wildin
Originally produced by the Circle Repertory Company, New York City

Shuttered Venue
Operators Grant
Program



115 North Hill St. Griffin, GA. 30223

THE INGRAM
FOUNDATION

Griffin Area
Arts Alliance

Griffin DAILY NEWS



SETTING

TIME

December 1940

PLACE

Chappaqua, New York, Mansion

Act I

15-Minute Intermission

Act II

The Players

(In order of Appearance)

Helsa WenzelElise Wright
Elsa von GrossenknuetenJill Coleman
Michael KellyErick Jackson
Patrick O'Reilly Gary Alexander
Ken De La MaizeChristopher Gansel
Nikki CrandallAlly Quick
Eddie McCuen Jack Mackim
Marjorie BaverstockCarla Cloud
Roger Hopewell Emory Schroeter
Bernice RothJill Shedd

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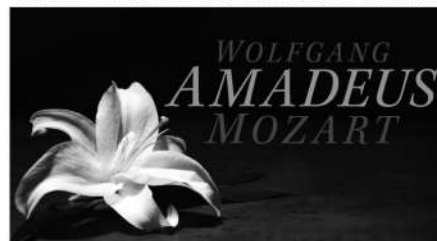
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The Players



GARY ALEXANDER (Patrick O'Reilly) is a familiar face to MSP patrons. Previous roles include the Doctor in *Foxfire*, Clifton Feddington in *The 1940's Radio Hour*, Harry Haywood/John Houseman in *War of the Worlds: The Panic Broadcast*, Heck Tate in *To Kill A Mockingbird*, Charlie in *On Golden Pond*, the stage manager in *It's A Wonderful Life*, Sir Lawrence Wargrave in *Ten Little Indians or Then There Were None*, and as Third Officer Pitman and the Major in *Titanic, the Musical*. Gary has appeared in multiple roles with GBT. When he is not on stage, he enjoys providing medical care to the good folks of Griffin-Spalding. Gary is the proud father of two children, Georganna and Will, and spouse to Cindi. Gary is both thrilled and humbled by his association with such talented actors, directors, choreographers, musicians, and vocalists. He would like to thank the patrons and sponsors for supporting our vibrant arts community.



CARLA CLOUD (Marjorie Baverstock) last appeared as Alice Bordin in *The Tin Woman* and Marlafaye Mosley in the *The Savannah Sipping Society* earlier this year. Originally from the Atlanta area, she has spent most of her adult life just over the state line in South Carolina, but has been back in this area since 2019. Having appeared on many different stages over the last 40 years, her two most favorite roles are Hilda in *Hilda's Yard* and Alice in *The Tin Woman*. In addition to theater, Carla has experience in all areas of media including film, TV, and VO. She was the lead female in the faith-based film, "Waiting for Butterflies" and most recently played a supporting role in the upcoming movie, "How Not to Date." Carla also taught children's theater and is a member of A Company of Friends. Currently she's the founder and Managing Director of A Gentle Witness, a non-profit outlet for the writing and performing of monologues of biblical women. She SO appreciates the love and support she receives from her husband, Vince.



JILL COLEMAN (Elsa von Grossenknueten) is making her debut performance with Main Street Players. It has been awesome meeting new people and experiencing theatre from new and different perspectives. Jill has been performing for 30 years in Florida and Georgia. Some of her favorite roles include, Aunt Eller in *Oklahoma*, Mama Morton in *Chicago*, Miss Hannigan in *Annie* and Savannah in *Mama Won't Fly*. Jill thanks God for all his blessings and for all the support from her amazing family and friends.



CHRISTOPHER GANSEL (Ken De La Maize) has become a MSP regular with his portrayal of Vanya in *Vanya, Sonia, Masha and Spike*, the Man in *Now and Then*, Kris Kringle in *Another Night Before Christmas*, Watson in *Holmes and Watson* and C.C. Showers in *The Diviners*. Griffin audiences may also remember him as Gomez in Griffin Ballet Theatre's production of *The Addams Family*. Other favorite roles include: Robert Kincaid in *The Bridges of Madison County*, Edward Bloom in *Big Fish*, Peter in *Jesus Christ Superstar*,

and both Freddy and Lawrence in different productions of *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*. Chris is a two-time MAT Award nominee for his work as George Milton in *Of Mice and Men* and Dan Goodman in *Next to Normal*. He thanks the MSP family for making him one of their own.



ERICK JACKSON (Michael Kelly) is pleased to be working with the Main Street Players for the first time. In the past he has worked with The Academy Theatre in *The Twelve Dates of Christmas* and *The Odd Couple*. He has also worked with The Front Porch Players in their production of *Walking Across Egypt*. Erick is a fan of the arts and his other artistic outlets include bass guitar and graphic design. Thanks to everyone who came out to see the show.



JACK MACKIM (Eddie McCuen) is a new face here at MSP. He has appeared in other shows in nearby theatres such as *Mamma Mia*, *Newsies*, *Cabaret*, and *Let Nothing You Dismay*. His interest for art and theater started in his high school production of *The Wizard of Oz* where he played the Cowardly Lion. He wants to thank the MSP board and the Director for this wonderful opportunity. He would also like to thank the cast and crew for their support and his wonderful girlfriend, Autumn, for her love and support as well.



ALLY QUICK (Nikki Crandall) recently appeared as the wacky daughter, Sammy, in *The Tin Woman*. Prior to this she played in multiple roles in MSP's 2018 production of *A Christmas Carol* and the flirtatious Darlene Henshaw in *The Diviners*. She is deeply invested in the theater and loves to perform. She served as an officer of her International Thespian Society Troop. As a freshman, she was cast as the lead role of Belle in *Beauty and the Beast, Jr.* In high school, she performed the lead in her school's One Act play that went to State during her sophomore year. She was recognized as an All Star Cast Member at the GHSA State Competition. Since then, she has also been cast as the Witch in *Into the Woods, Jr.*, and the Raven in an original play, *By Horror Haunted*, which was a tribute to Edgar Allan Poe. Other roles include Louise in *Gypsy*, several characters in Gordon States live Zoom production of *A Christmas Carol*, Cindy in *Car Wash*, an original musical by her friend Chadwick Loyd at Tuac as well as her most recent role as Allison Boujet in *Who Dunnit?* She is also working to improve her skills having taken a one on one class with Broadway talent, Alex Brightman, and is currently taking vocal lessons from her Uncle, James Stewart.



EMORY SCHROETER (Roger Hopewell) was last seen as Dillard Nations in *Foxfire*. Other roles at MSP include *Hank Williams: Lost Highway*, BJ Gibson in *The 1940's Radio Hour*, the Radio Technician in *Inherit the Wind* and Roy in *The Odd Couple*, Barnette Lloyd in *Crimes of the Heart*, Cousin Chicken, Mitch, Officer Dugger, Ronald, and Kelvin in *Mama Won't Fly*, Jack in *Cotton Patch Gospel*, Bill Ray in *On Golden Pond* and Harold Bride/Joseph Bell in *Titanic the Musical*. He grew up in Bowling Green, KY and has lived in Griffin, GA since 1999. He has been an active member of the choir at



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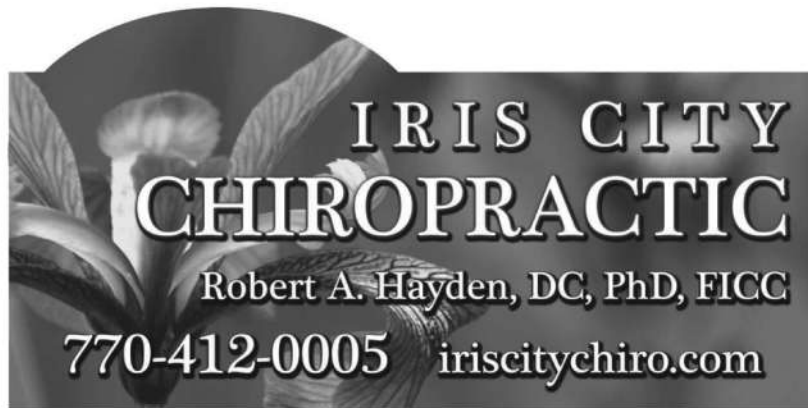
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Griffin First United Methodist Church, is a member of Griffin Choral Arts and plays bass guitar at The Branch, at Griffin FUMC. He is a general dentist and is practicing in Zebulon with Magusiak, Morgan and Brown Dentistry. He is married to Meredith and has two lovely daughters, Anna Leigh and Stuart.



JILL SHEDD (Bernice Roth) was last seen as Masha, in *Vanya, Sonia, Masha and Spike*. She moved to Griffin a few years ago. She was most excited to begin working with local theaters in the area, particularly Main Street Players. A friend from The Front Porch Players and Henry Players productions encouraged her to audition, which landed her here on the MSP stage for VSMS. Favorite roles with other companies include the Ice Queen, Jadis, from *The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe*; Muriel, from *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*; Sylvia, from *The Women*; and Rona Lisa Peretti, from *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. But most significantly, she was able to perform as Francesca, from *The Bridges of Madison County* just as stages everywhere went black for the pandemic. She thanks the good Lord for talents and gifts, but more importantly, for an understanding husband who enjoys the performing arts.



ELISE WRIGHT (Helsa Wenzel) is a Main Street regular. Previous roles include, Holly Burrell in *Foxfire*, Karol in *Another Night Before Christmas* and Abby in *Now and Then*. She recently graduated from Lees-McRae College with a B.S. in theatre arts. Some of her most recent credits include *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Addams Family* (Dance Captain), *Horn in the West* (Dancer), *Silent Sky* (Annie Jump Cannon), and *The Tempest* (Ariel).

Artistic Staff and Crew



JANICE AIKEN (Production Assistant) has helped behind the scenes on many MSP productions. Onstage performances include *War of the Worlds: The Panic Broadcast*, *A Trip to Bountiful*, *Inherit the Wind* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. She was recognized by the GAAA Heart for the Arts as Main Street Player's Most Valuable Volunteer for the 2016-2017 season. Janice serves on our board and has been volunteering for Main Street Players since the fall of 2012. She has been invaluable to our organization and has worked the Box Office, sold concessions, ushered, trained others to usher, answered the phones, helped clean the theatre prior to openings, worked set construction, repaired props and is an integral part of our Theater for Young Audiences program.



NATE BARNES (Lighting Designer/Lighting Technician) has been the Manager at the Griffin Spalding County School System's Auditorium for the past eight years. During this time, he has worked in both audio and lighting for various performances. Nate also volunteers on the audio and visual team at Oak Hill Baptist. He received his BBA degree from UGA in May 2020. We are delighted to have him as part of MSP!



CURTIS BROWN (Sound Design/Costume Design) is a Main Street Players regular. He has worked with Main Street in some capacity almost every season since 2002. He made his directorial debut with a very successful production of *Holmes and Watson*. He played multiple roles in *Every Christmas Story Ever Told (And Then Some!)* before the great shutdown. Other roles at MSP include Jane Twisden, Lord Edgar Hillcrest in *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, and Norman Bulansky in *The Boys Next Door*.



FRANK DANSBY (Master Carpenter) was Main Street's most valuable volunteer for the 2018-2019 season. He and his wife, Martha, are lifelong supporters of the arts and in particular theatre. Four years ago Frank joined Resident Scenic Designer BJ Hughes backstage at Main Street Players and quickly became a tremendous asset to the production team. With his background as an airplane mechanic and his vast knowledge of DIY (do it yourself), he quickly picked up on the construction techniques specific to theatre. Frank has worked on thirteen productions for Main Street. With his construction and carpentry skills, he has allowed BJ to expand his vision of what our productions can look like, resulting in even more professional looking sets and scenery. Thank you, Frank, for being part of the Main Street family!



BJ HUGHES (Director/Resident Designer) is enjoying his twelfth season with Main Street Players. He is even more delighted to be celebrating his 51st anniversary in professional theatre during which he has worked as an actor, teacher, director and designer. During his career he has produced, directed and designed over 150 productions. BJ is originally from New Jersey. After obtaining a degree in theatre, he spent four years touring America in classical repertory before settling in Atlanta where for the next 30 years he acted, taught and directed at the Alliance Theatre. He extends special thanks to Norma and Marian for inviting him to Griffin and providing a home with this creative theatre company.



KESLEY KNIGHT (Stage Manager) is working with MSP for her first time and has had a ball! She believes the *The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940* is a hilarious and thrilling who done it, and is excited to present it to the community.



KEITH POTTER (Audio Technician/Set Construction) is becoming a valuable asset to Main Street Players. He has assisted MSP with the set building for the past two shows and looks forward to a long relationship with us. He has been very active in theater in one aspect or another (from acting, to lighting and sound, stage managing, etc...) while serving in the US Army for 20 years in both Germany and Korea.

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NORMA RICHARDSON (Artistic Director) has been involved with theatre for most of her life and has appeared on a number of Atlanta stages among others. As a director her credits include: *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*, *Another Night Before Christmas*, *Hank Williams: Lost Highway*, *The Sweet Delilah Swim Club*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *Honky Tonk Highway*, *Nunset Boulevard*, *Inherit the Wind*, *Titanic, the Musical*, *Tuesday's With Morrie*, *Every Christmas Story Ever Told (and Then Some!)* in 2015 and 2019, *Mama Won't Fly*, and *Our Town*. On stage performances include: *Foxfire*, *Now and Then*, *The Wild Women of Winedale*, *Fireflies*, *The Lion in Winter*, *The Sweet Delilah Swim Club*, *Southern Comforts*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Love Letters*, *The Little Foxes*, *The Guys*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Grace & Glorie* (2 times), and *Same Time Next Year*. Her career in television began with Turner Broadcasting/CNN. After leaving Turner, she was an Executive Vice President with Primerica and General Manager for their corporate television production department for over 20 years. She is a native of Griffin, Georgia and is the Founding Artistic Director of Main Street Players.



MARIAN SORENSEN (Associate Artistic Director) received her theatrical training at the Alliance Theatre School at the Woodruff Arts Center. While there, she was contracted as a teacher (her other passion) for both their youth and adult programs. She served as the Assistant Director of the School from 1981-1986. Marian has performed and/or directed on the stages at The Alliance Theatre, Theatrical Outfit, Open City Theatre and Theatre in the Square. For MSP she has directed *The Tin Woman*, *Foxfire*, *Now and Then*, *Lion in Women*, *The 1940's Radio Hour*, *A Tuna Christmas*, *War of the Worlds: The Panic Broadcast*, *The Dinning Room*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Grace and Glorie*, and *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. While in Atlanta, she worked with Beverly Trader, Young Audiences and the Intern Program at the Alliance Theatre School to develop two plays based on student works that toured GA for several years: *Tales from the Peach* and *Red, White and Blue and You Too!* The later went on to win the George Washington Freedom Foundation Award in 1991. Marian returned to her hometown of Griffin in 1998, married in 2001 (love you, Neil and thank you for all your support) and has been involved with MSP since 2009. She thanks the Lord above and her parents for any abilities she might exhibit.





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