

Welcome to the Department of Theatre & Dance 2022-2023 Season!

The UWSP Department of Theatre & Dance is fully accredited by the
National Association of Schools of Theatre and the
National Association of Schools of Dance.

2022-2023 Theatre & Dance Faculty and Staff

Amy Beversdorf

Associate Lecturer, Dance

Emily Bustamante

Lecturer, Theatre

Michael Estanich

Professor, Dance
Dept. of Theatre and Dance Chair

Parke Fech

Lecturer, Theatre

Mark Hanson

Associate Professor, Theatre
BFA Musical Theatre
Program Coordinator

Jeannie Hill

Professor, Dance

Pamela Luedtke

Associate Lecturer, Dance

Tyler Marchant

Professor, Theatre
BFA Acting Program Coordinator

Jim O'Connell

Associate Professor, Arts Mgmt
Arts Management Area Coordinator

Gary G. Olsen

Professor, Theatre
Theatre Area Coordinator

Sarah Olson

Assistant Professor, Dance

Elizabeth Parks

Visiting Assistant Professor, Theatre

Sarah E. Ross

Assistant Professor, Theatre
BFA Design and Technology
Program Coordinator

Lisa Sanderson

Associate Lecturer, Theatre

Laurie Schmeling

Lecturer, Theatre
BA Drama Program Coordinator

Luke Shepherd

Assistant Professor, Theatre

Ann Warren

Technical Director

Dani Wyatt

Administrative Assistant II
School of Performing Arts



Indigenous Peoples Land Acknowledgement

The Department of Theatre and Dance would like to recognize that the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point occupies the unceded lands of the Ho Chunk and Menominee people.

Please take a moment to acknowledge and honor this ancestral Ho Chunk and Menominee land and the sacred lands of all Indigenous peoples.

About the Playwright

Renowned English novelist and playwright Agatha Christie (b.1890–d.1976) wrote her first detective novel during the first World War. Published in 1920, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* marked the first appearance of Hercule Poirot, the Belgian detective who would eventually feature in thirty-three novels, two plays, and fifty short stories within Christie's body of work. Her incisive brilliance was continuously on display in her intricate mysteries, earning her titles such as "Queen of Crime" and "Queen of Mystery." With its focus on psychological analysis and acute observation in crime-solving, her work helped to establish high specificity in the emerging mystery genre and became a cultural phenomenon. Poirot is her most popular subject and series. Other significant works include *And Then There Were None*, the *Miss Marple* collection, and *The Mousetrap*, the longest-running production in the history of London's West End. The prolific Christie remains the best-selling and most-translated novelist in history.

Dramaturg's Note

Murder on the Orient Express is an exemplar of the closed-room style of mysteries at which Agatha Christie excelled. Christie's weaving of layered lies and the subsequent untangling of them, often in a complete explanation of the crime towards the end of a piece, hold lasting influence on the structure and conventions of the genre. Interest in such stories has persisted through the 20th century and has recently experienced a significant resurgence with the success of productions like *Knives Out* (2019), *Only Murders in the Building* (2021), and, of course, continuing adaptations of Christie's own works for the big and small screen alike.

Riding the Orient Express was a childhood dream of Agatha Christie's. She first boarded our titular train in 1928 and frequented the Express in her travels to Middle Eastern excavation sites with her archaeologist husband—whom she met on one of her early trips. This familiarity with the Express inspired Christie's choice of location for the literary tale that has become, through the hands of adaptor Ken Ludwig, the play you will see tonight.

Murder on the Orient Express remains one of the most famous examples of Christie's classic structure and style, with the attention to detail and careful craft in mystery storytelling especially characteristic of cases centering on Hercule Poirot. This story examining the morality of revenge arose amid grave political upheaval in Europe as fascists and dictators took power preceding the second World War. The moral and ethical questions it raises are as enduring as the situational intrigue of her mystery-making method: What is the value of the law, and who are its arbiters? How far will and should a person go to find justice? What do we do when the difference between right and wrong is anything but black and white?

Through our production, we invite you to accompany Hercule Poirot as he confronts these questions and unravels the mystery of *The Murder on the Orient Express*.

Serena Alexander, Dramaturg
Sophomore BA Drama student

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
Department of Theatre & Dance
Presents

Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express

adapted for the stage 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.

Directed by Laurie Schmeling

Music Direction by Luke Shepherd

Murder on the Orient Express Cast

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Hercule Poirot | Parke Fech*^ |
| Monsiuer Bouc | Zachary Dolinar |
| Mary Debenham | Sophie Pitsch |
| Hector MacQueen | Kole Mallien |
| Michel the Conductor | Josh Verish |
| Princess Dragomiroff | Evaya Gonzalez |
| Greta Ohlsson | Cara Langhauser |
| Countess Andrenyi | Kaia Fitzgerald |
| Helen Hubbard | Emily Ruth |
| Colonel Arbuthnot/Samuel Ratchett | Gage McKnight |
| Head Waiter/Stage Directions | Monica Kuhn |

*Appears by permission of the Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

^UWSP Faculty/Staff member

2022-23 Season Production Staff

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|--|---|
| Technical Director | Ann Warren* |
| Music Director | Luke Shepherd* |
| Dialect Coach/Intimacy Coordinator | Parke Fech* |
| Stage Combat Choreographer | Parke Fech* |
| Stage Manager | Rachel Weber |
| Dramaturg/Foley Artist | Serena Alexander |
| Foley Designers | Emma Beckman, Olivia Halle, Angeline Holtzman-Forbes |
| Costume/Hair/Makeup Mentor | Emily Bustamante* |
| Costume Shop Assistants | Sam Baxter, Jordan Busse, Jane Cooperman, Tierney Detter, Steph Hogan, Angeline Holtzman-Forbes |
| Lighting and Sound Mentor | Gary G. Olsen* |
| Scenic/Paint/Props Mentor/Prop Shop Manager | Sarah E. Ross* |
| Scene Shop Assistants | Edgar Berumen, Mark Radtke, Alex Yeiter |
| House Manager | Aiden Betourne |
| Theatre & Dance Student Office Assistants | Alexis Flaten, Hanna Kiel, Ryan Niedenthal, Megan Shields |

Meet the Company

Alexander, Serena (*Dramaturg, She/Her*) Sophomore Drama and Psychology- Human Services Major from Nashville, TN. Recipient of the Anne Gilfry Schierl Fine Arts Award in Drama.

Dolinar, Zachary (*Monsiuer Bouc, He/Him*) Junior Acting Major from Waukesha, WI. Recipient of the James Mueller Award.

Fech, Parke* (*Hercule Poirot, He/They*) Lecturer of Theatre at UW-Stevens Point, teaching courses in Acting for the Camera, Dialects, Movement for Actors, Senior Showcase, Stage Combat, and Voice & Articulation. Member of the Actors Equity Association.

*denotes UWSP Faculty/Staff member

Meet the Company

Fitzgerald, Kaia (*Countess Andrenyi, She/Her*) Junior Musical Theatre Major from St. Paul, MN. Recipient of the Sentry Talent Scholarship and Stages to Equity Scholarship.

Gonzalez, Evaya (*Princess Dragomiroff, She/Her*) Junior Acting Major and Arts Management Minor from Waukesha, WI. Recipient of the Arts Bash Scholarship and Lawson Grant.

Kuhn, Monica (*Head Waiter/Stage Directions, She/Her*) Sophomore Acting Major and Psychology and Arts Management Minor from Oak Creek, WI. Recipient of the Presidential Gold Scholarship.

Langhauser, Cara (*Greta Ohlsson, She/Her*) Junior Musical Theatre Major and Arts Management Minor from St. Louis, MO. Recipient of the Sentry Scholarship and the Spring 2022 University Leadership Award.

Mallien, Kole (*Hector MacQueen, He/Him*) Junior Acting Major from Sturgeon Bay, WI.

McKnight, Gage (*Colonel Arbuthnot/Samuel Ratchett, He/They*) Junior Acting Major from Reedsburg, WI.

Pitsch, Sophie (*Mary Debenham, She/Her*) First-year Musical Theatre Major from Madison, WI. Recipient of the First-Year Theatre Arts Scholarship in Musical Theatre and the Presidential Purple Scholarship.

Ruth, Emily (*Helen Hubbard, She/They*) Junior Acting Major and Music and Arts Management Minor from Eleva, WI. Recipient of the Anne Gilfry Schierl Fine Arts Award in Acting and the Arts Bash Scholarship.

Verish, Josh (*Michel the Conductor, He/Him*) Senior Musical Theatre Major.

Weber, Rachel (*Stage Manager, She/Her*) Junior Drama, Professional Communication, and Media Studies Major from Appleton, WI. Recipient of the Presidential Gold Scholarship.

*denotes UWSP Faculty/Staff member

CONTRIBUTE TO BACKSTAGE

The Department of Theatre & Dance welcomes financial support for educational and artistic activities through a variety of programs, including existing scholarships and endowments, special projects support, bequests and planned gifts. For more information about contributing to the Department of Theatre & Dance, please contact Michael Estanich, Chair of the Department of Theatre & Dance, at mestanic@uwsp.edu or 715-346-3978. You may also donate online at <https://give.uwsp.edu/give-backstage> or by scanning the QR code found on the bottom of this page.

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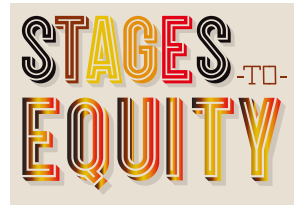
University of Wisconsin Stevens Point

The mission of the Department of Theatre and Dance is to serve:

- Its majors and minors through curricular offerings and performance/production activities that heighten intellectual, artistic, cultural, and humane sensitivities.
- The general student population through curricular offerings and stage productions that engender an appreciation and understanding of the performing arts and their contribution to the cultural and aesthetic enrichment of life.
- The university community and general central Wisconsin population through the production of quality stage performances.

STAGES TO EQUITY SCHOLARSHIP

In an ongoing effort to broaden and enrich our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity practices in the Department of Theatre & Dance, we've established the new *Stages to Equity Scholarship*. This award supports students who come from historically under-represented populations within the theatre, dance, and arts management student body at UW-Stevens Point. This academic year, we hope to grow the Stages to Equity endowment to support two annual scholarships for our students. We hope you might consider a gift to the endowment today! Scan the QR code with your mobile device, or visit www.give.uwsp.edu/stages-to-equity.



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