

**The Theatre of  
Western Springs  
Presents**



This program is partially  
sponsored by a grant from the  
Illinois Arts Council

***Murder at the Vicarage***

By Agatha Christie

Dramatized by

Moie Charles and Barbara Toy

Directed by *Craig Berger*

**Cast**

(in order of appearance)

**The Vicar**

..... **William FitzGerald**

**Griselda**

..... **Bridget Bittman**

**Dennis**

..... **Andy Belda**

**Mary**

..... **Linda Bugielski**

**Ronald Hawes**

..... **Kevin Slattery**

**Lettice Protheroe**

..... **Elyse Hultgren**

**Miss Marple**

..... **Dorothy Attermeyer**

**Mrs. Price Ridley**

..... **Terry Harrold**

**Anne Protheroe**

..... **Kathleen Kuser**

**Lawrence Redding**

..... **Rick Kabialis**

**Dr. John Haydock**

..... **Kevin McGrath**

**Colonel Protheroe**

..... **Peter Hilton**

**Inspector Slack**

..... **Robert Emmett Reidy**

**Constable Jennings**

..... **Hank Miller**

**Setting**

The study of a vicarage in the country

**Time**

Summer, some time after WW II

**ACT I**

Scene 1 A Tuesday afternoon

Scene 2 6:45 in the evening of the following day

Scene 3 Thursday morning

**ACT II**

Scene 1 Late in the afternoon of the following Sunday

Scene 2 An hour and a half later

There will be one fifteen minute intermission.

**Acknowledgments**

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**Special thanks to:**

The Fruit Store, Western Springs and Hinsdale, for providing apple cider at cost with free delivery.

Starbucks, Western Springs, for providing decaf coffee for the Thursday performances.

The photographs illustrating this program are from The Theatre of Western Springs' archives.



Judy DiVita & Mary Pavia in  
*A Murder is Announced*  
TWS, January, 2002

## **Director's Corner**

*By Craig Berger*

Agatha Christie, the Queen of Crime, is the best selling author of all time. She has sold over two billion books and has been translated into over 45 languages. She has many dedicated fans, and one may be sitting right next to you now as you wait for the curtain to rise on *Murder at the Vicarage*! The fans are eager to feel the suspense and to experience the "Agatha Christie" music. And together the audience will follow the leads with Miss Marple.

I was very excited to be asked to direct at the wonderful Theatre of Western Springs. But the weight of an Agatha Christie was very heavy during my first days of preparation. Especially since I am neither a reader of mysteries, nor have I ever been a real fan.

But then, I heard the voice of Aaron Frankel once again in my ear. Aaron is a mentor of mine. He changed my life in the theater by saying, "Don't study the critics. Don't study the surrounding writings by scholars or by the playwright. Study the script. Do the script. Let the script speak." Aaron, who was a stage manager once for Helen Hayes and a New York director, reminded me of the words attributed to Robert Browning, "When I wrote that poem, only God and I knew what it meant. Now, only God knows!"

And so as a director, here or anywhere, I say and said to the designers and cast, we are the secondary artists. The playwright is the primary artist. And even she/he may not know the essence of the

script. So, we trusted the story that Agatha wrote. We just did our best to tell that story honestly. We hope, in doing so, Agatha's story, tonight, is clearly in your ears and eyes, with all the tension and ending lift, she penned.

## **About the Director**

**Craig Berger** is currently the Artistic Director of the EverGreen Theatre Ensemble, a non-Equity professional theatre in Naperville. He hopes it too will someday become an Equity venue as did the Buffalo Theatre Ensemble. In 1989, Craig founded the Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, as a Non-Equity company: but after Craig became an active member of the League of Chicago Theatres and re-mounted several productions in Chicago - - some of its offerings directed by Craig and other directors now with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre (Gary Griffin), Goodman (Steve Scott), and Steppenwolf (Phyllis Shuringa) -- the Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, in residence at the MacAninch Arts Center, became a full Equity Company.

Craig also founded The New Theatre Company of Downers Grove, joined in this venture by a host of like-minded founders drawn from a variety of Chicago and west suburban institutions – professionals engaged in radio, medicine, banking, education, music, commerce, and television. All three of his ventures have always paid stipends – equity or not. Several TWS actives, Cindy Blaszak, Megan Wells, Judy Divita, Cal Turner and others have worked with him at EverGreen

Craig's philosophy of theatre is seeded in his vision for EverGreen,

to “explore dreams...lost and found!” He says, “I want to be involved in a theatre that engages people so much in the story, through a good script and strong actors, that it becomes a part of the thoughts of the audience that night...and the next morning... and, in some way, it lets them think about the human condition...perhaps it lifts them up...perhaps it helps them think through things...but, in some way, it is more than a nice ice cream cone.” This expresses his concept of “engagement theatre,” as opposed to “escapist theatre.” “Engagement theatre is theatre that stays in the ‘pocket of your mind’ (unlike money in your pocket) and brings you inspiration, or goads you to work on some issue. It remains there and works on you.”

Of interest too is Craig’s take on the integration of auditions, rehearsals, and the playwright’s intentions: He feels that everyday, in and out of rehearsals, he learns more about the craft of directing. As a director he strives to help the story become clear to the audience and to work together with the actors to bring to life the believable human beings who are in that story. More important to Craig is helping to make the audition room, the rehearsal room and the theatre space a warm room, so that the playwright’s story can best be heard and so that actors and designers and all in the theatre family can feel comfortable in working for the playwright.

Craig’s favorite productions, which he has either directed or acted in include: *American Buffalo*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Hamlet* (which he directed both as a student production and as a professional production with

BTE, one year later), *The Glass Menagerie*, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Bill W. and Dr. Bob*, *Scrambled Eggs*, *Balm in Gilead* and *Standing on My Knees*. He has directed over a hundred productions in elementary schools, high schools, college/universities and in professional venues.

Craig’s accomplishments also include directing and acting in over nine community theaters, extending through Illinois, Michigan, Washington and Oregon. For over 30 years, Craig taught theatre at College of DuPage, where he served as Director of Theatre and Artistic Director of Buffalo Theatre Ensemble. Craig received his Bachelor of Arts and Theater degree from Eastern Michigan University; his Master of Arts in Acting and Directing from the University of Washington; a Master of Fine Arts in Directing from Illinois State University; and a Doctorate of Education from Nova University.

## ***Dramaturg’s Diary***

*By Rick Pavia*

Agatha Christie was born in 1890 in Devonshire, England, the youngest of three children in a conservative, upper-class family. She never attended a public school, but was educated by governesses and tutors and, as such, became adept at creating games to keep herself occupied. Initially, Ms. Christie turned to music as a way to express her feelings, but later in life took up writing.

Agatha Christie introduced one of her most well-known and beloved characters, Miss Jane Marple, an

Winner of the 2007 Performing Arts Award of The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence

# Bill W. and Dr. Bob

a play by  
**Samuel Shem & Janet Surrey**  
directed by Craig Berger

Sept 18-26

performed at  
Meiley-Swallow Thrust Stage at North Central College  
31 S. Ellsworth St • Naperville, IL

for more information and tickets:

[www.EverGreenTheatreEnsemble.org](http://www.EverGreenTheatreEnsemble.org)  
or by phone at the NCC Box Office 630.637.SHOW

In 1929, famous New York stockbroker Bill Wilson crashes with the stock market and becomes a hopeless drunk. Dr. Bob Smith, a surgeon from Ohio, has also been an alcoholic for thirty years, often going into the operating room with a hangover. Through an astonishing series of events, Bill W. and Dr. Bob meet and form a relationship, each helping to keep the other sober. This is the amazing and often humorous story of the two men who pioneered Alcoholics Anonymous, as well as the story of their wives, who founded Al Anon.

**EverGreen**  
theatre ensemble

*Book of Days* by Lanford Wilson (10/23-11/14)

*The Gift of the Magi* adaptation by Daniel A. Scurek (12/4-19)

*A Doll's House* translation by Nicholas Rudall (1/23-2/13)

elderly spinster from the fictitious English village of St. Mary Mead in her novel *Murder At The Vicarage* in 1930, although the character of Miss Marple had been previously featured in short stories. Featured in 12 novels, Miss Marple exemplified the cozy style, a form of mystery fiction that became popular in England during the 1920s and '30s and was later defined as the Golden Age of fiction.

In the quiet English village of St. Mary Mead, the vicar in our play, the Reverend Leonard Clement, discovers the lifeless body of Colonel Protheroe in his study. The story evolves from there to a solution with input from various characters, primarily Miss Marple, Dr. Haydock and Inspector Slack, aided as well by limited, but important input from the rest of the cast.

Christie ultimately became the acknowledged Queen of the Golden Age. In all, she wrote over 66 novels, numerous short stories and screenplays, and a series of romantic novels using the pen name Mary Westmacott. A number of her works were made into successful feature films, the most notable *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974). Her work has been translated into more than one hundred languages. She remains the single most popular mystery writer of all time.

*Murder At The Vicarage* was adapted as a play by Moie Charles and Barbara Toy in 1949 and opened at the Playhouse Theatre in London on December 16, 1949. We hope you enjoy our adaptation of this classic Agatha Christie whodunit.

## ***Production Credits***

### **Director**

Craig Berger

### **Stage Manager**

Cal Turner

### **Assistant Stage Manager**

Sue Wisthuff

### **Box Office Crew**

Ed Barrow, Linda Bremer, Susan Cardamone, Gary Davidoff, Jennifer Jermano Miller, Mary Pavia, Marilyn Wilson

### **Costume Designers**

Cindy Blaszak, Dave Valenta

### **Costume Crew**

Mary Ellen Druyan, Andrea Imes, Diane Lenihan, Martha Niles

### **Dramaturg**

Rick Pavia

### **Hospitality Crew**

Rosemary Beale, Jan Benedict, Vicki Blair, Hedy Bosch, Ruth Ceval, Carol Clarke. Philip Conway, Sue Eck, Bill Fanning, Terry Fanning, Bonnie Hilton, Karen Holbert, Dennis Hudson, Karla Hudson, Ann Marie Hultgren, Harry Hultgren, Mike Huth, Pat Huth, Jennifer Jermano Miller, Dick Jacoby, Donna Kanak, Eleanor Kanak, Rich Kanak, Karin Kramer,

Joyce Love, Debby Mills, Jon Mills, Jackie Raschke, Sandra Rasnak, Joan Roeder, Pat Rotz, Donna Sauers, Carol Suda, Merrilyn Tomchaney, Susan Valenta, Susan Waldschmidt, Gini Welch, Mallory Whitlock, Sue Wisthuff

### **House Managers**

Dave Bremer, Joe Delaloye, Peggy Carlson, Rob Cramer, George Dempsey, Mike Janke, Donna Kanak, Heinz Karplus, Terry Locke, Bill Love, Mary Pavia, Bill Rotz, Don Strueber, Marilyn Weiher, Denny Wise

### **Lighting Designer**

Rob Pold

### **Lighting Crew**

Tom Frohnapfel, Bonnie Hilton, Mike Mallon, Dave Romito, Cathy Van Horne

### **Makeup Designers**

Stacy McCargo, Sarah Vanikiotis

### **Makeup Crew**

Linda Auer, Nancy Belda, Peggy Carlson, Stacie Heintze, Donna Kanak, Kelli Kopp, Stephanie Williams

### **Program Production**

Marion J. Reis

### **Properties Designer**

Angelee Johns

### **Properties Crew**

Tricia Boren, Mary Ellen Druyan, Karen Holbert, Mike Williams

### **Publicity Chair**

Jennifer Jermano Miller

### **Sandwich Sunday Crew**

Rich Kropp

### **Set Construction Chair**

Joe Delaloye

### **Set Construction Crew**

Grace Abrahamson, Ann Cahill, Brian Centers, Tom Frohnapfel, Mike Huth, George Letten, Jason McCargo, John Mueller, Paul Roach, Fred Sauers, Terry Smartz, Peter Sonnenberg

### **Set Designer**

Thad Hallstein

### **Set Dresser**

Angelee Johns

### **Set Painting Chair**

Bonnie Hilton

### **Set Painting Crew**

Peggy Carlson, Carol Clarke, Ann Hultgren, Jan Mahlstedt, Lydia Hilton, Schuyler Hilton, Maggie Oeltgen, Anna Telfer, Charron Traut

### **Sound Designer**

Jack Calvert

### **Sound Crew**

Betsy Stiles, John Mueller