

# PLAYBILL®

May River Theatre  
Ulmer Auditorium  
Bluffton, SC



MUSICAL COMEDY  
**MURDERS**  
OF 1940

A PLAY BY  
JOHN BISHOP



OCTOBER  
14 - 16 & 21 - 23

May River Theatre

PRESENTS

# THE MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS OF 1940

by  
John Bishop

with

Lyndsay Malphrus

Julie Seibold

Gregg Steele Heppner

Jayme Brinson

Lily Beck

Gail Westerfield

Kyle Price

Debbie Reier

Corrie Frohnappel

Steve McElroy

Stage Manager  
Haden Gonsowski

Directed by  
Christine Grefe

*The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940* is presented through special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service.

440 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016

Phone: 212-683-8960 Fax: 212-213-1539

[www.Dramatists.com](http://www.Dramatists.com)

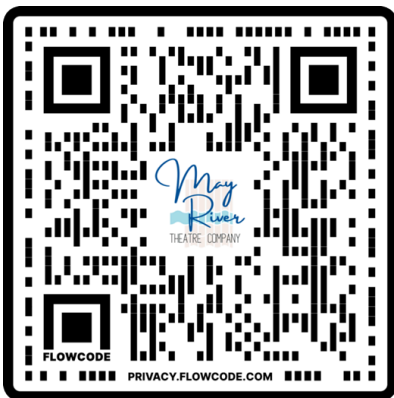
# CAST

## Cast Members

Helsa Wenzel	Lyndsay Malphrus
Elsa Von Grossenknueten	Julie Seibold
Michael Kelly	Steve McElroy
Patrick O'Reilly	Corrie Frohnafel
Ken De La Maize	Gregg Steele Heppner
Nikki Crandall	Lily Beck
Eddie McCuen	Jayme Brinson
Marjorie Averstock	Gail Westerfield
Roger Hopewell	Kyle Price
Bernice Roth	Debbie Reier

## Production / Creative

Director	Christine Grefe
Stage Manager	Haden Gonsowski
Stage Hand	Erica Rubin-Irish
Set Design / Construction	Cindy Palko
Costume Design	Elizabeth Schlieger
Lighting Design	Liz McGinnes
Light Board Operator	Christa Fortney
Sound Board Operator	Ellie Friedman

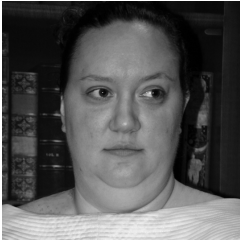


Please take a moment and fill out our MRT Questionnaire.

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# WHO'S WHO

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## Lyndsay Malphrus

*as Helsa Wenzel*

Lyndsay has participated in community theatre for 10 years be it on-stage or back-stage. Her first show with MRT was *The Producers*. Lyndsay has also done community theatre with Coastal Stage Productions but she is happy and excited to return to MRT. Lyndsay is thankful for the opportunity to be directed by Christine in this wonderful production. Some of Lyndsay's favorite roles were *The Mute* in *The Fantasticks*, *Sarah* in *Company*, and *Twink* in *Christmas Belles*.



## Julie Seibold

*as Elsa Von Grossenknueten*

This is Julie's third time on the May River Stage, but she's been active in the Beaufort theatre community since 2016. Her most recent role was *Shelby* in *Steel Magnolias* at May River earlier this year. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her husband and dog, crocheting, studying languages, being silly with friends, and playing with spreadsheets. She thanks all you wonderful people for coming to support the theatre and hopes you enjoy the story the cast and crew have worked so hard to put together.



## Steve McElroy

*as Michael Kelly*

Although this is only Steve's second show with May River Theatre, he has been acting and directing off and on since he was in high school (a long time ago). Favorite roles include: *Snoopy* in *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown*, *Elwood P. Dowd* in *Harvey*, *Scrooge*, *Giles Corey* in *The Crucible*, and *Mr. Laurence* in May River's production of *Little Women*. Steve would like to thank his wife for her patience and support.



## Corrie Frohnepfel

*as Patrick O'Reilly*

Corrie first appeared at MRT in the ensemble of *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Favorite roles include *Rizzo* in *Grease*, *Reverend Mother* in *Nunsense*, & *Meg O'Shiator* in *Murder in Margaritaville*, her acting debut. She thanks Christine & this wonderful cast for their patience & wishes she could give them each a "shivelful" of gold from the Hills of Blarney.

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# WHO'S WHO

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## Debbie Reier

*as Bernice Roth*

This is Debbie's debut with May River Theater, and she is thrilled to be back on stage with many of her friends from past shows. Debbie moved from Maryland to Lady's Island six years ago after retiring from a 37 year career of teaching high school English and theater. Thanks to Christine, cast, and crew for your awesome energy! Love to my biggest fan, John.



## Lily Beck

*as Nikki Crandall*

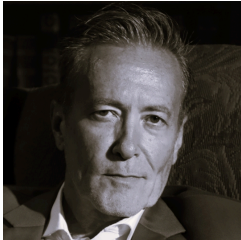
Lily Beck is a junior at BLHS. She has done theatre eleven years, and this marks her eighth onstage appearance at MRT. Previous roles include: Stoner Chick- Heathers; Ensemble- All Together Now; Molly U/S- Annie; Fan- A Christmas Carol; Tracy Turnblad- Hairspray. She also has crew/dresser experience. Many thanks to Christine for this opportunity!



## Jayme Brinson

*as Eddie McCuen*

Jayme caught the theater bug and started acting in 2017 with Coastal Stage Production's "Clybourne Park". He has also been in shows with USCB including "She Kills Monsters" and "The Tempest". Jayme wants to thank his ever growing theater family for their support and encouragement.



## Gregg Steele Heppner

*as Ken De La Maize*

After nearly 40 years working in the music industry and the last 12+ with SiriusXM as Programming VP/GM, Gregg retired to South Carolina and promptly immersed himself in local arts. He's acted on stage, had roles in nearly a dozen films to date, is an active member of the Beaufort Film Society, and last Fall directed his first film (starring fellow cast member Julie Siebold!) in which he wrote the screenplay and will also be serving as Executive Producer. He's also directed "He Said And She Said" this past Spring and acted in "The Complete Works Of William Shakespeare (Abridged)" for The May River Theatre Company, where he also is on the Board Of Directors. He'd like to thank his fellow actors in this production for their assistance as well as Director Christine Grefe for her excellent guidance!

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# WHO'S WHO

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## **Gail Westerfield**

*as Marjorie Averstock*

This is Gail's second show at MRT & her first show post-pandemic, so she is thrilled to be in this wonderful cast & to work with Christine again. Favorite roles include Sr. Aloysius (Doubt), Nurse Ratched (twice), & Louise (Always...Patsy Cline). She is the founding producer of Misspent Youth Productions & has a jewelry business, Flowerdyhead Creations, that Bernice LOVES.



## **Kyle Price**

*as Roger Hopewell*

Kyle is excited to be in his first show with MRT. His favorite previous rolls are Egg, Cinnamon, Spicy Tuna, & Toilet Paper. Oh you meant ROLES okay. Harold Hill, Judas, Vandergelder, & Dentist/Audrey2.



## **Christine Grefe**

*Director*

Musical Comedy Murders marks Christine's 4th time directing at MRT and her 43rd show overall. Most recently she has been in MRT's Steel Magnolias and The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged. Christine has been a part of MRT since its 3rd season.



## **Haden Gonsowski**

*Stage Manager*

He/They. 17. Freshman at University of South Carolina Beaufort. I just moved down here from Wisconsin. I've acted in four shows before this, Alice in Wonderland Jr., The Lion King Jr., The Wizard of Oz, and As She Likes It. I've also crewed for Something Rotten, The Revolutionists, and MRT's production of Heathers.

ADS

**Auditions: October 20th**

MAY RIVER THEATRE PRESENTS

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL:**  
A HAUNTINGLY GOOD VICTORIAN COMEDY



Written and directed by Travis Hornsby

Ticket: \$25

Dec. 2, 3, 9, 10, 2022 | 7:30 PM

Dec. 4 and 11, 2022 | 2:00 PM

20 Bridge Street - [mayrivertheatre.com](http://mayrivertheatre.com)

**Tickets Available November 1st**

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BLUFFTON SC

TICKETS \$5 AT THE DOOR



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by John Cariani

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HELP MAKE  
DREAMS COME  
TRUE

HILTON HEAD CHRISTIAN ACADEMY FINE ARTS  
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BOOK BY  
Thomas & Bob  
Meyhous & Martin

MUSIC BY  
Matthew  
Sklar

LYRICS BY  
Chad  
Bogardis

BASED ON THE NEW LINE CINEMA FILM WRITTEN BY  
David Berenson

DIRECTED BY  
Hilary Andrew Cox

MUSICAL DIRECTOR  
Jill Johnson

NOVEMBER 2, 3 & 5 • 7:00 PM  
NOVEMBER 5 • 2:00 PM

AT HHCA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

\*10 STUDENTS/SENIORS • 15 ADULTS

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TO

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FOR THEIR CONTINUED  
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Message from the Director:

I love a good mystery, don't you? From the time I was a little girl, I read Encyclopedia Brown, followed by Nancy Drew. I moved on to Agatha Christie, Edgar Allen Poe and Stephen King, Thomas Harris, John Grisham, and Lillian Jackson Braun.

I adore the board game, and the movie, Clue. Make me think. Fool me, if you can. Truth be told, that ain't easy. I'm a grade A mystery solver and now that I'm all grown up? I get to put the bad guys in jail as a criminal prosecution attorney.

The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940 hits everything that I love about a good mystery and more! I saw this show many years ago at the Hilton Head Playhouse at Dunnegan's Alley and it stuck with me. When I was approached to direct, of course I said yes! Costumes from my favorite era for fashion, set in a library with secrets to reveal, and a cast of colorful characters with means and motive? Sign me up!

May River Theatre holds a special place in my heart. I discovered MRT in the third season when I auditioned for Sly Fox. Musical Comedy Murders marks my 4th time directing here and my 43rd show overall. It's a beautiful place to play! Thank you for coming out today and I hope that you have as much fun solving our little mystery as I have had directing it. Good luck...

Christine

BEGIN YOUR OWN JOURNEY WITH MAY RIVER THEATRE AND SIGN UP TODAY!

**May River**  
THEATRE COMPANY

**VOLUNTEERS**  
*needed*

**TODAY'S THE DAY TO  
JOIN OUR MRT FAMILY...**

VISIT US AT [MAYRIVERTHEATRE.COM](http://MAYRIVERTHEATRE.COM)

Fill out the volunteer form

CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR OUR 2023 SEASON!

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# END NOTES

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Message from the MRT Board President,

We began our 20th season with a solid plan, a little bit of post-pandemic apprehension, and a strong desire not just to reopen, but to do so in a way that honored our past while ushering in our future. Both *Steel Magnolias* and *Heathers* did just this, and now we present *The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*, a show that was written in the 80's like the two previous shows, but honors a classic theatre genre; the murder mystery! We are thrilled to have MRT veterans along with new community members guiding us through the twists and turns that are sure to keep you on the edge of your seat with both suspense and humor.

As we approach the end of our 20th season (make sure you do not miss Travis Hornsby's *A Christmas Carol: A Hauntingly Good Victorian Comedy* this December) the apprehension has dissipated. I am fortunate to be supported by an amazing board full of endless talent and generosity! Throughout this season they have directed, performed, designed lights, costumes and sets, along with a long list of less glamorous tasks. Along with this dedicated team we have also seen our volunteer bank grow, people who are happy to be returning to MRT and others that have relocated to the Bluffton area and chosen us as their new theatre family. They are the ones that make all of this possible both in front of and behind the scenes. If you are interested in becoming involved please go to our website and fill out our form.

With this season of growth, the MRT Board is now thrilled to announce our 21st season. Classic and contemporary theatre, each of which will challenge us to engage with the human condition through a plethora of emotions. We hope to make you laugh, cry, and of course, reflect on the world around you in our productions of *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, *RENT*, and *The Addams Family*. In addition to this amazing regular season we will be presenting two special events. Our second Series of One Acts as well as a Community Holiday Production.

Season tickets will once again be offered as we confidently move forward into year 22! Season tickets will be available December 1st at [mayrivertheatre.com](http://mayrivertheatre.com). Anyone that purchases their season tickets in the month of December will receive a complimentary pass to our Series of One Acts, a gift to you for your commitment to us.

Sponsorship and advertisement opportunities are also back! If there is anything we have learned in the past few years, it is the COMMUNITY that is essential to creating a successful theatre.

Thank you for your continued support and enjoy the show!

Elizabeth Schlieger  
MRT Board President

THE GLASS MENAGERIE \* is presented by special arrangement with  
Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York."

THE RISE AND FALL OF LITTLE VOICE is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals.  
[www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)

RENT  
Is presented through special arrangement with Musical Theatre International (MTI).  
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. [www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)

THE ADDAMS FAMILY A NEW MUSICAL is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by Theatrical Rights Worldwide 1180 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 640, New York, NY 10036. [www.theatricalrights.com](http://www.theatricalrights.com)

# OPTIONAL CONTENT



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**MISSION:** May River Theatre is a nonprofit organization committed to engaging the Bluffton community through a breadth of quality theatrical performances that facilitate growth in both the production and understanding of the entire theatrical experience.

**VISION:** May River Theatre is the area community theatre that performers seek out when looking for productions that both challenge and showcase their full abilities, that new community members become involved in to build lasting relationships, and finally, MRT is the area community theatre that patrons attend who are interested in being entertained and challenged by a breadth of traditional and contemporary productions.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Elizabeth Schlieger

Vice-President: Christa Fortney

Treasurer: Jeff Corry

Jennifer Green

Michelle McElroy

Liz McGinnes

Ellie Friedman

Gregg Heppner

Cindy Palko

May River Theatre is a nonprofit corporation with a 501(c)(3) IRS determination.



# Announcing the MRT 2023 Season

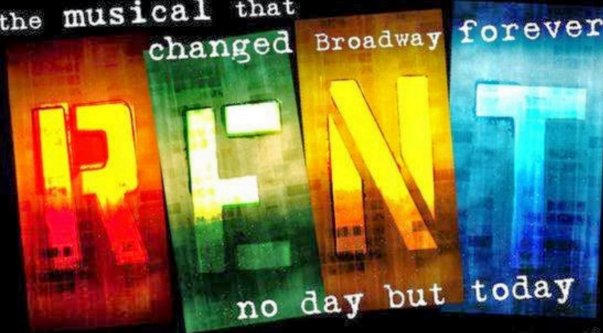
Tennessee Williams'

## THE GLASS MENAGERIE

## THE RISE AND FALL OF LITTLE VOICE

BY JIM CARTWRIGHT

the musical that  
changed Broadway forever



no day but today  
Book, Music and Lyrics by Jonathan Larson

## The ADDAMS Family THE MUSICAL COMEDY

Special Events: One Act Series and Holiday Production