



Footlights

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2024

The Players of Utica Newsletter

She Kills Monsters Offers Fantasy, Adventure, and Joy

THEATRE AT ITS best will transport you into interesting worlds —perhaps ones you’ve never experienced before. *She Kills Monsters* just might do that, especially if you’re not familiar with the universe of such immersive role-playing games as Dungeons & Dragons. The Players of Utica production opens on January 19 at the Players Theatre. *Footlights* spoke with director **Michael Clark** about the unique play.

FOOTLIGHTS: What do you find appealing about *She Kills Monsters* that led you to direct it?

MICHAEL: *She Kills Monsters* is a wonderful show with characters to which we can all relate. The reason Dungeons & Dragons is such a popular game worldwide is because it gives people the ability to tell their own stories the way they want—whether those stories be grand epics or silly fantasy plays, like *She Kills Monsters*. Stories that deserve to be told.

FOOTLIGHTS: What were your biggest challenges in putting together this production?

MICHAEL: The biggest challenge was finding ways to balance the reality of our characters’ struggles with the fantasy of the world in which they so often live. There are some very emotional scenes between the characters in the real world, and then in the next scene they’re fighting a giant gelatinous cube monster! Finding the balance in a way the audience will appreciate is the biggest challenge, but one in which I think we excel.

FOOTLIGHTS: There’s quite a bit of action in the play. How do you handle that?

MICHAEL: There’s a lot of action in this play! I’ve been in theater for almost two decades, and one thing audiences might not know is that choreographing a fight onstage is just as much work, if not more, than choreographing dance numbers in musicals. We were very lucky that my dear friend **Jim Drake** was able to come in and help us out. He’s been studying stage combat and fight choreography for years, and more recently teaching classes on the subject. It’s a lot of hard work, but the cast has proved up to the task—and the fights look awesome!

FOOTLIGHTS: Do audiences need to know anything about Dungeons & Dragons or any other role-playing games to appreciate the show?

MICHAEL: They do not! The creator of Dungeons & Dragons, Gary Gygax, had a saying: “The essence



of a role-playing game is a group, cooperative experience.” You don’t need to know that a Bugbear is neither a bug nor a bear to see this show; all you need to know is that it is a group of people working together to tell a fantastic story.

FOOTLIGHTS: What will audiences enjoy most?

MICHAEL: This show has so much for the audience to connect with and enjoy. There are awesome fight scenes, hilarious jokes, and real, heartfelt moments between these characters they will come to love. *She Kills Monsters* is a show about nerdy, queer joy—but it is also a show about discovering love where you didn’t expect, to which we all can relate.

The play features **Lizzie O’Connor, Sarah Wright, Joshua Thompson, Gabe Hage, Hannah Ali, Claire Bosley, Alaces Jewel Sarmiento, Haley Gatley, Mary Grace Kehrl, Dante Polumbo, Joan Price, Justin Jones, Vin Cavo, Makayla Arnold, Salvatore Perritano,** and **Mason McMahon**.

She Kills Monsters has a running time of about one hour, thirty minutes and has no intermission. The six performances of the play are as follows:

- Fridays, January 19 and 26 at 7:30 p.m.
- Saturdays, January 20 and 27 at 2:00 p.m.
- Sundays, January 21 and 28 at 2:00 p.m.

For all tickets, go to our website at <http://www.playersofutica.org/order-tickets> or call 315-724-7624. ☆



JANUARY 19-21, 26-28, 2024

Become a Show Sponsor

And help defray the rising cost of our productions

HOW WOULD YOU like to have your name — or the name of your business — featured prominently on the poster and publicity for an upcoming Players production? Become a sponsor!

Sponsors help defray the cost of sets, props, costumes, printing, advertising — and especially the cost of the rights we have to pay to perform a show — all of which have gone up substantially in the last few years. And, unfortunately, ticket sales often do not cover all of these expenses.

That's where show sponsors can be a big help. A **single-show sponsorship is \$300**, and as a sponsor your name (or business name) will be printed on the show's poster, featured in publicity on our website and social media, and even mentioned on stage at the beginning of each performance, announcing your generosity and love of live community theatre. (And it's tax-deductible!)

Interested? Send your \$300 sponsorship check to:

Players of Utica Sponsorship
PO Box 29
New Hartford, NY 13413

How to Get Your Tickets

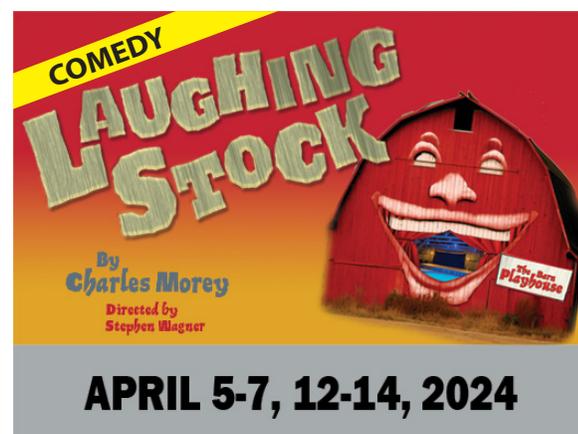
MANY OF YOU already know how to get tickets for our shows, but for those who don't, here's the scoop:

- **By phone:** Just call 315-724-7624 and tell us which performance you would like to attend. Have your credit card ready.
- **Online:** Go to our ticket page and securely purchase your tickets with your credit card: www.playersofutica.org/order-tickets.
- **At the door.** You can often buy tickets at the box office on the day of the performance. But just don't get there too late because seating is limited and sometimes shows sell out.

If you're a subscriber, you have already bought your tickets, of course, but you should still call or go online to reserve your seat. See you at the show! ☆

Coming Up at Players

After *She Kills Monsters* in January, next are these great shows



THANK YOU, SUPPORTERS

A special thanks to these subscribers who gave extra support to Players

ANGEL LEVEL

Henry Bamberger
Robert Barone
Joni DePerno-Zahas
Marilee Ensign
Art Felshaw
Shirley Felt
Daniel Fusillo
James Gifford
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John Murphy
Barbara Shuck

PATRON LEVEL

Patricia Knobloch
Constance Marson
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FRIENDS OF PLAYERS

Vince Scalise, Coldwell Banker

FROM THE PLAYERS HISTORY ARCHIVES



THE LITTLE FOXES - JANUARY 1976

Directed by **Harrison Cline** and featuring **Daisy Harris, Ted Henderson, Win Haslam, Dr. John Kakaty, Paul Flemma, Maria Wallace, Joe Tierno, Andrea Fourtounis, Harry Teuchert, and Samuel F. Babbitt.**



Would You Like To Volunteer?



Yes, you can volunteer to help Players of Utica on show nights or even backstage.

As you know, Players is an all-volunteer theatre organization, and although we have a working Board of Governors who take care of all the tasks a community theatre requires, we can always use the help of theatre-loving volunteers.

Maybe that's you! You can be an MVPV — a "Most Valuable Players Volunteer."

On show nights:

- take tickets
- hand out programs
- help with concessions

Help with a production backstage:

- build or paint sets
- find and manage props
- help with costumes

We also need volunteers to help prepare the theatre for show nights, including cleaning, tidying up, and just generally making the theatre look spiffy.

So what do you get out of it?

Aside from being an important part of your community theatre, volunteers also get to see the show for free ... or will receive a comp ticket for a future performance! Pretty good deal, eh?

If you're interested, send an email to Kelly, our volunteer coordinator, at kellydegraceplayers@aol.com

Open Auditions for *Laughing Stock*

OPEN AUDITIONS for the comedy *Laughing Stock*, directed by Stephen Wagner, will be held at the Players Theatre as follows:

Friday, February 2, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, February 3, 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 4, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. For details: www.playersofutica.org/auditions

We've Been Selected by the Hannaford Community Bag Program!



For all of January, every reusable Hannaford Community Bag purchased at the Kellogg Rd. Hannaford store earns us \$1!

WE ARE EXCITED to share that Players of Utica has been selected to benefit from Hannaford's Community Bag Program, which makes it easy for customers to contribute to their local communities.

For the month of January, whenever a \$2.50 reusable Hannaford Community Bag is purchased at the **Hannaford store located at 50 Kellogg Road, New Hartford**, \$1 will be donated to Players. This is a great way to broaden awareness and help our community theatre.

Let's get started! Share the news with friends and family. Call, send emails, and post on social media. The more people who purchase the Hannaford Community Bag in January, the more we can raise!

To learn more about this program, please visit hannaford.2givelocal.com. ☆

PLAYERS OF UTICA

2023–2024 Season

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Players of Utica
1108 State St., Utica
315-724-7624
www.playersofutica.org

Star Dims



PLAYERS OF UTICA lost one of its actors and volunteers with the passing of **Jeff Hartz** in October 2023. Jeff appeared in several Players' productions including *Sly Fox* (1993), *Little Shop of Horrors* (1998), *Almost, Maine* (2011), *A Delicate Balance*

(2013), and *Our Town* (2013).

"Jeff was a kind soul who had a great passion for theater, especially Players," says friend **Lonnie Etter**, a Players actor and board member. "When he was no longer physically able to take the stage, he found other ways to be active. He loved helping backstage and volunteered his time for many shows. His presence will be dearly missed by all of those who were fortunate to know him."

Players extends its sympathy to Jeff's family and friends. ☆

2023-2024 SEASON

It's not too late to buy a subscription, even though there are just three shows left in the season. Why? Because with each member subscription, you get 5 Flex-Pass tickets at a special price, which saves you money. And you can use those 5 tickets any way you want for the three remaining shows. Bring friends!

W;t

A Play By **Margaret Edson** Directed by **Mike Beehm**

SEPT. 8-10, 15-17, 2023

By **Neil Simon**

LAST OF THE REDHOT LOVERS

Directed by **Deborah Martin**

OCT. 27-29, NOV. 3-5, 2023

SHE KILLS MONSTERS

By **Qui Nguyen**
Directed by **Michael Clark**

JANUARY 19-21, 26-28, 2024

LAUGHING STOCK

By **Charles Morey**
Directed by **Stephen Wagner**

APRIL 5-7, 12-14, 2024

FUNNY GIRL
THE MUSICAL

Music by **Jule Styne**,
Lyrics by **Bob Merrill**
Book by **Isobel Lennart**
from an original story by **Miss Lennart**

Directed by **Daniel Fusillo**
Music Direction by **Karen Cortiglano**

JUNE 6-9, 13-16, 2024

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO OUR 2023-2024 SEASON

Players of Utica 2023-2024 Season Subscription Form

FL-01-02-24

Complete this form and mail with payment to: Players of Utica, Subscriptions, PO Box 29, New Hartford, NY 13413

Name: _____ Address: _____

City, St, Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Payment: Check Credit Card Account #: _____ - _____ - _____

Expiration Date: _____ CW: _____ Signature: _____

Each subscription gets you 5 Flex-Pass tickets. Use one at each show or two at two shows, or any other combination. Select the # of subscriptions at the desired level below. An additional tax-deductible donation is always appreciated!

of Adult @ \$80 ea. = _____

of Patron @ \$120 ea. = _____

of Angel @ \$150 ea. = _____

of Senior (62+) @ \$60 ea. = _____

of Student @ \$35 ea. = _____

Here's an additional donation of \$ _____

GRAND TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

(Please do not send cash through the mail.)
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO PLAYERS OF UTICA, INC.
To purchase online with credit card: www.playersofutica.org
By phone: 315-724-7624



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PURCHASE ONLINE