

LAUGHING LSTOCK

By
**Charles
Morey**

Directed by
Stephen Wagner



APRIL 2024



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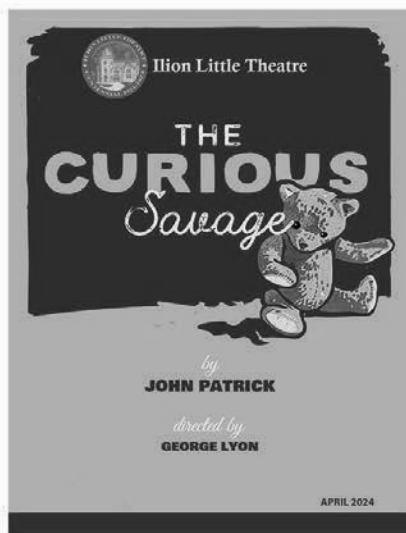


Ilion Little Theatre Centennial Celebration Season 2023-2024

April 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 2024

The Curious Savage by John Patrick

In this warm comedy by John Patrick, elderly widow Mrs. Savage has been left \$10 million dollars by her late husband.. She intends to give the entire fortune away to people who wish to pursue their "foolish dreams," but her stepchildren strongly object.



June 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, 2024

The Savage Dilemma by John Patrick

In the sequel to *The Curious Savage*, world-weary after extensive travels, the reputedly wealthy Mrs. Ethel Savage returns to the sheltered precincts of a private country club-like "sanatorium" called The Cloisters, seeking refuge among her former fellow patients.

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2023-2024 SEASON



WIT

By Margaret Edson • Directed by Mike Beehm
Vivian Bearing, an esteemed professor of 17th-century poetry at a prestigious college, has just found out that she has a terminal illness. What follows is a story of moving transformation — rife with intense emotion, meaning, and a powerful message about life, love, and the choices we make.

September 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 2023



LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS

By Neil Simon • Directed by Deborah Martin
Barney is a successful restaurant owner and family man who, after 22 years of marriage, decides it's time for him to have an affair. Using his mother's empty apartment, he attempts to lure women over for intimate encounters, but his efforts prove more than a little bumbling. One of Neil Simon's best!

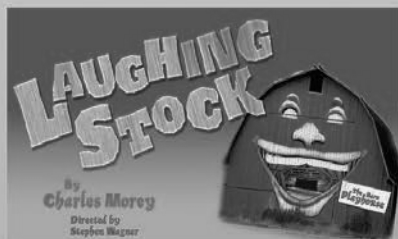
October 27, 28, 29, November 3, 4, 5, 2023



SHE KILLS MONSTERS

By Qui Nguyen • Directed by Michael Clark
Having lost her entire family in a tragic accident, Agnes Evans embarks on an adventure to know her little sister Tilly better by playing a Dungeons & Dragons module that Tilly had written — and discovers more than she could have imagined!

January 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 2024



LAUGHING STOCK

By Charles Morey • Directed by Stephen Wagner
When an amateur summer theatre schedules a repertory season of *Dracula*, *Hamlet*, and *Charley's Aunt*, comic mayhem ensues. Follow the well-intentioned but unprepared company from its outrageous auditions to ego-driven rehearsals to opening nights gone disastrously awry. A hilarious backstage farce and truly affectionate look into the world of the theatre.

April 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 2024



FUNNY GIRL

Music: Jule Styne, Lyrics: Bob Merrill

Book: Isobel Lennart • Directed by Dan Fusillo

This Tony Award winning musical is based on the life and career of comedian and Broadway star, Fanny Brice. Told in flashback, it features her stormy relationship with gambler Nicky Arnstein. A classic!

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June 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 2024

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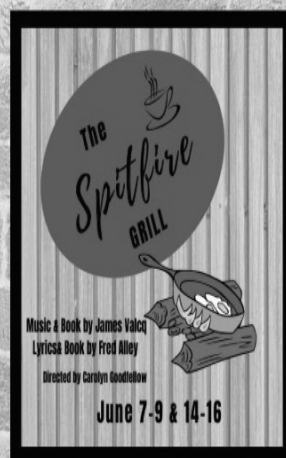
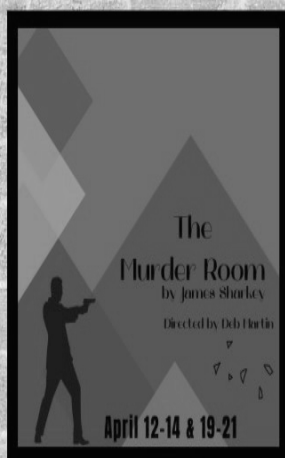
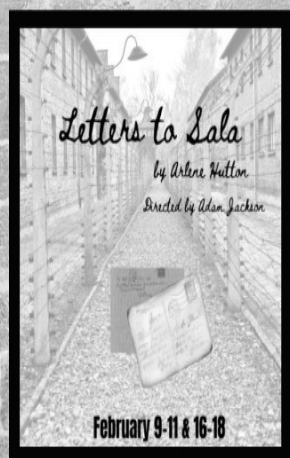
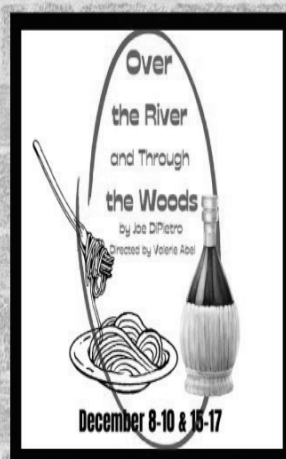
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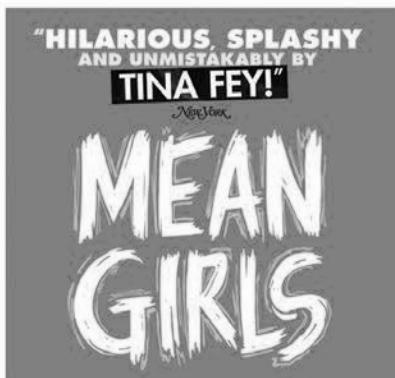
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APRIL 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 2024

Laughing Stock

By **Charles Morey**

Directed by
Stephen Wagner

Stage Manager
Shelby Deere

Set Design and Construction
Art Felshaw

<i>Gordon Page</i>	.....	Lonnie Etter
<i>Jack Morris</i>	.....	Joshua Thompson
<i>Susannah Huntsmen</i>	.....	Jessie Rogan
<i>Mary Pierre</i>	.....	Alexis Carey
<i>Tyler Taylor</i>	.....	James McNeil
<i>Vernon Volker</i>	.....	Eric Almleaf
<i>Richfield Hawksley</i>	.....	Paul Boehlert
<i>Daisy Coates</i>	.....	Michele Buday
<i>Craig Conlin</i>	.....	Vincent Cavo
<i>Sarah McKay</i>	.....	Janet Hanna
<i>Henry Mills</i>	.....	Michael O'Brien
<i>Braun Oakes</i>	.....	Chuck Bastien
<i>Karma</i>	.....	Kelly Maida

SCENES

The play takes place at The Barn Playhouse in New Hampshire.
Only Act 1, Scene 2 takes place in a NYC audition space.

Season Sponsor: PJ Green

“Laughing Stock” is presented by arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc..

Additional Production Staff for *Laughing Stock*

Director's Assistant, Props	Julia Fernandez
Scene Painting	Art Felshaw
Lights & Sound	Stephen Wagner
PR & Marketing, Poster & Playbill Design	Stephen Wagner
Volunteer Coordinator	Kelly DeGrace

PLEASE NOTE: No audio or recording devices of any kind are to be allowed during the performances. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, cameras, camcorders, and digital recording devices of any kind.

Fire/Emergency Notice: The exit sign nearest your seat is the shortest route to the street. In the event of an emergency, walk calmly to that exit.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER?

Yes, you can volunteer to help Players of Utica on show nights or even backstage. Take tickets, hand out programs, help with concessions, or work on a production building sets, helping with props, and more. As an MVPV (Most Valuable Players Volunteer), you will see the show for free or will receive a comp ticket for a future performance! Go to:

<https://www.playersofutica.org/volunteer>—or scan the code!



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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST AND CREW

Eric Almleaf (Vernon) — Eric has been acting in and directing shows in the Utica Rome area since 1993. Shows include *Amadeus*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Kodachrome*, *The Butler Did It*, *Noises Off*, and *Frankenstein* to name just a few. Eric always enjoys the opportunity to be on the Player's stage and this time has been no exception!

Chuck Bastien (Braun) — For Chuck, it is hard to believe this is even real. When he went to college, theater wasn't even on his mind. It started with a small ad for *Scrooge* tryouts. Now 21 shows later, he once again is lucky enough to share the stage with his theater family. From musicals to drama to comedies, it is simply an incredible fun ride. So as Chuck would say, "Grab your ticket, find your seat, and enjoy the show."

Paul Boehlert (Richfield) — When Paul was young, his fondest wish was to be cast in a Players production. It took many years and a lot of experience, but *Laughing Stock* is his eighth Players show, working with directors such as Ron Medici, Art Felshaw, Jane Metzger, Joni Deperno-Zahas, and Steve Wagner. Gratitude and thanks to them all, and there's another item crossed off the bucket list..

Michele Buday (Daisy) — This is Michele's first play with Players of Utica. "I want to thank our director, Steve Wagner, and this wonderful cast for a truly enjoyable experience. My husband and I moved to Whitesboro in 2021. I acted in my first play in 2022 at RCT as Emily in *Geezers*. My second play was *Drinking Habits* as Mother Superior. Most recently I was Sala in *Letters to Sala*. As mother of 4 and grandmother to 7, it was only after I retired that I had the time to pursue a lifelong love of theatre. Community theatre is an excellent place to make new friends and to participate in a wholesome pastime that provides entertainment to family, friends, and neighbors. I also want to thank my husband, Tom, for his constant support and patience."

Alexis Carey (Mary) — Alexis is thrilled to be performing with such an amazing cast at Players of Utica. Since she began performing, Alexis has participated in more than thirty-five

shows. Most recent shows include *Newsies*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Helium* (Ruth), *Christmas Belles* (Twink), *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Game Show* (Ethel Tinsley), and *Miracle on 34th Street* (Dr. Pierce). When not on stage, Alexis is trying very hard to not cause any injuries to herself and working toward a master in education degree. She would also like to take this time to say thank you to those involved on creating such a fun show that is filled to the brim with laughter. Also, *beep beep* to her wonderful castmates.

Vin Cavo (Craig) — Vin is performing in his 23rd stage production, his 7th with Players. Vin has been performing on stage since 2008 when he first started in *Scrooge*. Ever since, he's been in many other productions such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Game's Afoot*, *Noises Off*, *Amadeus*, and many more. Vin is the son of Michelle and Vincent Cavo of Whitesboro.

Lonnie Etter (Gordon) — Lonnie has lived in Central New York for more than 15 years and currently works as the Veterans Employment Representative covering the Mohawk Valley for the state of NY. He is also a voice talent and his voice can be heard on radio stations throughout Central New York. Some of Lonnie's past performances include *Christmas Belles*, *Peace and Quiet*, *Game Show*, *Last Chance Romance*, *Dashing Through The Snow*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Sordid Lives*, *Splitting Issues*, *Cahooots*, *Our Town*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *All My Sons*, and most recently, *The Man in the Bowler Hat* and *Frankenstein*. Lonnie has also performed in musical performances such as *Gypsy*, *Company*, *Promises Promises*, and *110 in the Shade*. Lonnie would like to thank his family and castmates for all of their support during rehearsals and performances.

Janet Hanna (Sarah) — Janet has acted at Players, Rome Community Theater, Ilion Little Theater, and dinner theater. She was most recently seen in *Over the River and Through the Woods*. Janet volunteers at at Hope House and RCT. Janet would like to thank Steve Wagner

for casting her, all the cast and crew, her husband Mark for his support, and the audience! Enjoy the show!

Kelly Maida (Karma) — Kelly is thrilled to be a part of this production. It has been an amazing experience. This is her first appearance in theatre. Kelly is an actress and has been in several movies, such as *Benji's Hour*, *Parallel Parking*, *Hangman*, and TV shows such as *Good Behavior*, *The Vampire Diaries*, and *The Originals*, just to name a few. She is also currently working on a TV series called *Tmnt Discenium*. She has always loved the supernatural and vampire series. She is also an award-winning writer. And she hopes that you enjoyed her character just as much as she loved playing the role.

James McNeil (Tyler) — James is an MVCC graduate with a degree in theatre. He has participated in Players of Utica productions such as *The Adventure of Tom Sawyer*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Sly Fox*, *Frankenstein*, and *Wit* earlier this Players season. He has also participated in productions of *Sweeney Todd* and *Newsies* at the Ilion Little Theatre Club. He is honored and blessed to return to the Players stage and perform with such an amazing cast and crew!

Michael O'Brien (Henry) — Michael is very excited to be performing again at Players of Utica with such a wonderful cast and crew. Some previous shows he has performed in are *Rope* (Kenneth Raglan), *Hedda Gabler* (George Tesman), *The Brothers Grimm Speculation* (Rumpelstiltskin, Clobber Elf, Dwarf 2, Actor Who plays all roles in Cinderella), *Don't Drink the Water* (Axel Magee), *The Mousetrap* (Detective Sergeant Trotter), *Dracula* (Arthur Holmwood), *Jekyll and Hyde the Musical* (The Bishop of Basingstoke), *110 in the Shade* (Jimmy Curry), *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Tom Sawyer), and *Newsies* (Jack Kelly).

Jessie Rogan (Susanna) — Jessie loves entertaining audiences and hopes she does that for you tonight. She has been in *Charlotte's Web*, *Kodachrome*, and *Christmas Bells* right here at Players of Utica. She has also been in numerous musicals with Summer Stage in Rome,

including *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Young Frankenstein*, and *Fiddler on the Roof*. Jessie would like to thank everyone involved in this amazing production! Keep your bubble strong and the vampires out!

Joshua Thompson (Jack) — *Laughing Stock* is Josh's nineteenth theatrical production! Most recently, he was seen playing the roles of Davey in *Newsies* at Ilion Little Theater as a part of their centennial celebration season and Chuck the Dungeon Master in *She Kills Monsters* at Players of Utica! One full decade has passed since he started participating in theater, and he is beyond thankful for all his friends and family who have shown their endless support over the past decade! He cannot wait for more shows to come in the near future!

Shelby Deere (Stage Manager) — Shelby is a graduate of UAlbany with a bachelors in theatre. She has previously stage managed for *Sweeney Todd* at Ilion Little Theatre, *The Butler Did It*, and *Wit* at Players of Utica as well as *In The Blood* at Utica University. She has recently played Katherine in *Newsies* at Ilion Little Theatre and Rome Capital Summer Stage's production of *The Little Mermaid*. Previously, she has been involved with several productions at Players of Utica and at Utica University.

Julia Fernandez (Director's Assistant) — Julia is making her debut at Players as Director's Assistant. Since her one and only performance in *Twelve Angry Jurors*, presented at a small theatre in Hell's Kitchen NYC a long time ago, she has been occasionally auditioning for various parts at various community theatres. She is very happy and inspired to be part of this talented, energetic and fun group of people who are working so diligently to present and entertain the Utica community with *Laughing Stock*.

Stephen Wagner (Director) — Steve has directed several shows at Players, including *Boeing Boeing*, *Agnes of God*, *Like Sitting Ducks*, *Sly Fox*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *Frankenstein*, and *Christmas Belles*. Steve is a member of Players' Board of Governors and serves as its VP for Marketing and Development.

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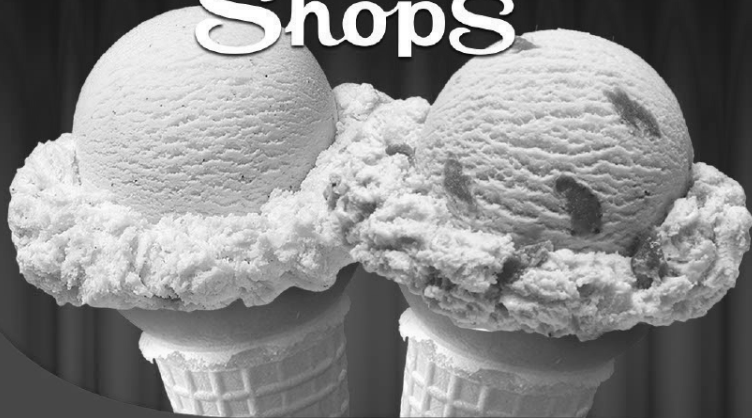
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Players of Utica Remembers Jane Metzger

For many years, the name Jane Metzger was almost synonymous with Players of Utica in the minds of the actors, directors, and crew who worked with her as well as audience members who attended our productions. For 68 years (counting her first appearance on the Players stage), Jane was an accomplished actor, highly regarded director, and a valued and influential member of Players' Board of Directors.



Jane passed away on July 1, 2023 at the age of 96.

Jane appeared as an actor in 26 Players of Utica productions. Despite her long list of acting credits, Jane was perhaps even prouder of her accomplishments as a director, having directed 27 productions for Players.

As a member of Players' Board of Directors, Jane served for 40 years, from 1983 to 2023; she was corresponding secretary from 1986 to 1988, vice president from 1997 to 1999, president from 2000 to 2003, past-president for the 2003-2004 season, and since 2004 was an emeritus board member. As a patron of the theatre, she rarely missed attending one of our shows.

Players of Utica offers its condolences to Jane's family. We will sorely miss our great theatre friend.

**We would like to thank
the following people who
made donations to
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in Jane's memory.**

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NEXT AT PLAYERS OF UTICA



FUNNY GIRL

Music: Jule Style

Lyrics: Bob Merrill

Book: Isobel Lennart

Director: Dan Fusillo

Music Director: Karen Corigliano

Choreographer: Patrick St. Thomas

This Tony Award winning musical is based on the life and career of comedian and Broadway star, Fanny Brice. Told in flashback, it features her stormy relationship with gambler Nicky Arnstein. A classic!

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