

The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940

Auditions to be held at the Three Rivers Community Player's building. 15526 Millard Rd. Three Rivers.

May 5 and 6th at 7pm.

Directed by Patrick Nugent. For questions call (269) 535-7654 or email Patrick.Nugent110@gmail.com

Performances are June 20-22

Synopsis~

The creative team responsible for a recent Broadway flop (in which three chorus girls were murdered by the mysterious "Stage Door Slasher") assemble for a backer's audition of their new show at the Westchester estate of a wealthy "angel." The house is replete with sliding panels, secret passageways and a German maid who is apparently four different people—all of which figure diabolically in the comic mayhem which follows when the infamous "Slasher" makes his reappearance and strikes again—and again. As the composer, lyricist, actors and director prepare their performance, and a blizzard cuts off any possible retreat, bodies start to drop in plain sight, knives spring out of nowhere, masked figures drag their victims behind swiveling bookcases, and accusing fingers point in all directions. However, and with no thanks to the bumbling police inspector who snowshoes in to investigate, the mystery is solved in the nick of time and the "Slasher" unmasked—but not before the audience has been treated to a sidesplitting good time and a generous serving of the author's biting, satiric and refreshingly irreverent wit.

CAST LIST~

Helsa Wensel- [Shannon Michelle Piper](#)
Elsa Von Grossenkneuten - Anne Lape
Michael Kelly- [Regina Brown-Mains](#)
Patrick O'Reilly- [Philip L Borkholder](#)
Ken De Le Maize- [Lars J Loofboro](#)
Nikki Crandall- [Kathie Lyczynski](#)
Eddie McCuen- [Clayton Lyczynski II](#)
Marjorie Baverstock- [Sharon Weissmann](#)
Roger Hopewell- [Bob Slingerland](#)
Bernice Roth- Lisa Harrison.

List of characters

Helsa Wenzel

Helsa is the maid of the Grossenkneuten estate. She is killed in the first scene of the play, only to be impersonated by her twin brother, Dieter. The actress who plays Helsa also appears at the end of the play as "Katrina, the cook from Koblenz."

Elsa Von Grossenkneuten

Elsa is the owner of the mansion and is the financial backer of many musicals. Elsa summons the group together in an attempt to find out who murdered her "friend" Bebe McAllister. She is extremely eccentric, and thinks that the idea of chasing after a killer is great fun. Her grandfather was a spy, and she claims that espionage runs in her blood.

Michael Kelly

Kelly is an undercover cop. Elsa appeals to him to help solve the mystery of the Stage Door Slasher. Kelly's tough, no-nonsense attitude puts him at odds with the zany Elsa and the dramatic types that visit. He is kidnapped by an unseen figure and disappears into a secret passage. Willie C. Carpenter was the first to play him.

Patrick O'Reilly

O'Reilly claims to be an Irish tenor, but he is very suspicious, especially in regards to the mysterious Helsa. The two

engage in a physical brawl. Eventually, O'Reilly claims to be "Tony Garibaldi", an undercover cop with a Bronx accent-only to reveal himself as a Gestapo Agent named Klaus Stansdorff, sent to find German defectors. Nikki confronts him, but before he can reveal the truth, Helsa stabs him through a copy of Moby-Dick. The original O'Reilly was played by Nicholas Wyman.

Ken De La Maize

First played by Michael Ayr. Ken is a "typical" director, speaking of theater as a "pure art." He also has an annoying habit of name-dropping, constantly citing the various celebrities he has worked with over the years. Everyone always claims to have seen the films he makes, only for him to reveal that they have not yet been released. Ken is eventually revealed as the Stage Door Slasher, and explains that his hatred of ballet dancers stems from his father, who ran off with one and abandoned his mother. Eddie thwarts him, and he is taken away, rambling about how he knows Louella Parsons.

Nikki Crandall

Originally played by Dorothy Cantwell. Nikki is considered a typical chorus girl-but she is eventually revealed to be Ensign Nicole Crandall, of United States Naval Intelligence. Her secret mission was to find the Germans who were to sabotage American war efforts. She is also interested in solving the mystery of the Stage Door Slasher, and helps to break the code in Bebe's notebook. Ken almost kills her, followed quickly by Dieter. Eddie saves her twice, prompting the two to fall in love.

Eddie McCuen

Directly based on Bob Hope, Eddie is the out of work comedian that ties the different story lines together. He is attracted to Nikki, but fumbles when he tries to talk to her. He was a replacement for an actor, and thus has no connection to Manhattan Holiday. He is the one who realizes the connection between the Slasher case and the party, and later helps to defeat Ken and Dieter. These brave actions unite him with Nikki. He has an obvious attraction to Nikki the whole play, and ultimately ends up saving the day and getting the girl. First played by Aaron Demetri Maximus.

Marjorie Baverstock

Marjorie is a Broadway producer. She constantly flatters everyone around her, and speaks in elevated language; her "new word" is "divoon." She is accidentally killed by Dieter at the end of the first act; strangely, no one seems to notice, despite the fact that there is an enormous sword through her back. Marjorie was first played by Pamela Dunlap.

Roger Hopewell

Originally played by Richard Seff. Roger is the composer for "White House Merry-Go-Round", and Bernice's partner; the two have had a string of Broadway hits. Roger enjoys teasing Ken about his artistic ways, but flares up whenever someone insults his musical style. He also knows how to deal with Bernice's many quirks. Towards the end of the play, Roger reveals a surprising knowledge of ciphers, and helps Nikki and Bernice break the code in Bebe's notebook.

Bernice Roth

The perpetually thirsty lyricist, she is Roger's partner. Bernice is very odd and emotional, frequently losing her composure and screaming. When Marjorie fails to respond to the closing number of "White House Merry-Go-Round", Bernice is hugely offended, despite the fact that Marjorie was dead at the time. She spends the entire second act attempting to "fix" the play, even when she is held hostage by Ken, O'Reilly, and Dieter. In the finale, she is struck with inspiration toward a new work that takes place in the heartland of America-a cowboy play called Nebraska. This is a spin off of the play Oklahoma! Bobo Lewis originated the role.