

*Agatha Christie's*

# MURDER

ON



THE

# ORIENT EXPRESS

*by Ken Ludwig*





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●●●●●●●●●●  
**MAIN STAGE**

**Presents**

# MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS



By Agatha Christie  
Adapted for the stage by Ken Ludwig

**Directed by Kathy Clopper**

**RATED PG-13**

"Murder on the Orient Express" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals  
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. [www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)

**THE VIDEOTAPING OF THIS PRODUCTION IS A VIOLATION OF  
UNITED STATES COPYRIGHT LAW AND ACTIONABLE FEDERAL OFFENSE**

**This performance is 90 minutes with with one 15-minute intermission.**



## Director notes

When I agreed to direct *Murder on the Orient Express*, I didn't realize what a challenge it would be. I took it on because my directorial debut was Gerald Moon's play, *Corpse!*, another great murder mystery.

The challenges start with Agatha Christie herself. A prolific writer of short stories, books, and plays—over 1 billion copies of her works published in English and another billion in 44 foreign languages. This story started out as a serialized newspaper story and has since been published as a book (1934), radio play, movie (1974 and 2017), and stage play (2017). And all versions are different from each other! Because of the differences, we have taken artistic license with some aspects of the story in this production. Due to space constraints, the Dining Car and Observation Deck are combined into a Dining Car with Lounge. The Sleeper Car berths are broken out to one enlarged berth for the action in one of them. To add some color and general excitement to the launching of the Orient Express on its journey, we added a market atmosphere to the Train Platform—which also gave our stage crew an opportunity to join the scene.

Production challenges included 1934 costumes, designing and creating several train cars and exotic locations on a small stage built for vaudeville, finding and building a plethora of period props, creating 1934 makeup and hairstyles, making believable wounds with blood—lots of blood, engineering sounds and music to complement the action of the play, shining the light on every mood and nuance in the story, painting the details that make the scenes pop, and choreographing all of the above into a smooth running show. I am blessed with the best production team to bring this show to you. And, of course, a superb cast who have faithfully attended rehearsals, memorized lines and blocking, and have been very patient with my vision for this show.

The moral dilemma of the story is also a challenge, especially in the current political climate in the US and the world. Trying not to spoil the ending for those not familiar with the story but, I have had several conversations with friends and those involved with the show—do you think the victim deserved to be murdered? Do you think the murder itself was justified? Was Poirot's final decision correct? Is there a scenario that might cause you to consider taking a life? Pretty heavy stuff for a fun little fictional murder mystery! But, some questions you might want to think and talk about after you have seen the show.

I hope you will enjoy our colorful little journey, I hope it is a welcome break from the stresses of today's world. And, that maybe you might consider some of the moral challenges brought to us by Agatha Christie and Ken Ludwig.

-Kathy

### Synopsis of Scenes

#### SETTING

1934 Istanbul and aboard the Orient Express as it travels from Istanbul to Western Europe

#### ACT I

Scene 1: Prologue

Scene 2: Morning. Dining room of the Tokatlian Hotel in Istanbul

Scene 3: A little later. Platform of the Orient Express

Scene 4: Following. The Dining & Observation Car

Scene 5: That evening. The sleeping berths

Scene 6: Later. Radio Room

Scene 7: Following. The Dining & Observation Car

Scene 8: Middle of the night. Corridor of the Sleeper Car

Scene 9: The next morning. Corridor of the Sleeper Car

Scene 10: Later. The Dining & Observation Car

INTERMISSION

#### ACT II

Scene 1: The next moment. Inside Samuel Ratchett's berth

Scene 2: Following. Radio Room

Scene 3: Later that morning. The Dining & Observation Car

Scene 4: A moment later. Radio Room

Scene 5: Following. The Dining & Observation Car

Scene 6: Conclusion



## Cast (in order of appearance)

### **Hercule Poirot -**

Barton Wayne Teeters

### **Head Waiter -** Phil Baisley

### **Mary Debenham -** Sarah Sexton

### **Helen Hubbard -** Amy Smallwood-Ringenberg

### **Hector McQueen -** Dylan Dalbey

### **Colonel Arbuthnot -** Jackson Thompson

### **Monsieur Bouc -** Ethan Bain

### **Conductor Pierre Michel -** Mickey White

### **Princess Dragomiroff -** Robyn Zitnick

### **Greta Ohlsson -** Beth Good

### **Samuel Ratchett -** Andy Shepherd

### **Countess Andrenyi -** Allison Mopps

**Vendors -** Jessica Beare, Electa Berk, Nicole Castillo, Tammy Cornell, Leo Davis, Victoria Ellison, Crystal Hernandez, Paul Jordan, Vicki Martin, Ryan Shaw, Elizabeth Vlietstra

**Voice Actors -** Ada Smoker, Derek Worch

Special cameo appearance by  
Charlie the Chicken

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***Agatha Christie's***  
***Murder on the***  
***Orient Express***

## Production Team

**Director:** Kathy Clopper

**Assistant Director:** Sandi Cox

**Production Assistant:** Crystal Hernandez

**Stage Manager:** Hollie Caskey

**Scenic Designer:** Nathaniel Arnett

**Props Supervisors:** Phil Baisley & Jennifer Brokamp

**Costume Designers:** Jan & Paul Jordan

**Hair & Make-up Supervisor:** Tammy Bertsch

**Lighting Designer:** John Oberle

**Sound Designer:** Rick Funk

**Technical Director:** Aaron Clarke

## Crew

**Assistant Stage Manager:** Sandi Cox

**Deck Manager:** Derek Summan

**Deck Crew:** Jessica Beare, Electa Berk, Nicole Castillo, Tammy Cornell, Leo Davis, Victoria Ellison, Crystal Hernandez, Vicki Martin, Ryan Shaw, Elizabeth Vlietstra

**Fly Crew Lead:** Nathaniel Arnett

**Fly Crew:** Leo Davis

**Light Board Operator:** Cole Hicks

**Master Electrician:** John Oberle

**Sound Board Operator:** Rick Funk

**Hair and Make-up Crew:** Barb Blanford, Traci McCollum

**Costume Crew:** Susan Arnett

**Lead Scenic Painter:** Pam Frazier

**Assistant Scenic Painter:** Nicole Andreas

**Additional Paint Team:** Leo Davis, Sandi Cox, Electa Berk, Amy Smallwood-Ringenberg, Dylan Dalbey, Elizabeth Vlietstra, Victoria Ellison, Laura Ellison

**Lead Carpenters:** Mickey White

**Set Build Team:** Josh Smith, Leo Davis, Jackson Thompson

### NOTICE:

This production includes the use of realistic firearms for theatrical purposes. All firearms on-stage are props or blanks designed for safety, and **no live ammunition is ever used.**

Your safety, as well as that of our cast and crew, is our top priority. If you have any concerns, please don't hesitate to speak with a member of our front-of-house team.



# Cast



Barton Wayne Teeters



Ethan Bain



Sarah Sexton



Dylan Dalbey



Mickey White



Robyn Zitnick



Beth Good



Allison Mopps



Amy Smallwood-Ringenberg



Jackson Thompson



Andy Shepherd



Phil Baisley



Crystal Hernandez



Elizabeth Vliestra



Jessica Beare



Electa Burk



Victoria Ellison



Nicole Castillo



Vicki Martin



Ryan Shaw



Tammy Bertsch



Paul Jordan



Leo Davis



Ada Smoker



Derek Worch



# Directors



Director  
Kathy Clopper



Asst. Director  
Sandi Cox

## Bios

**Barton Wayne Teeters, *Hercule Poirot*:** In lieu of a bio, Barton Wayne has decided to honor as many innocent people as possible who have been killed by ICE: Renee Good, Keith Porter, Luis Moncada, Yorlenys Zambrano-Contreras, Isidro Perez, Johnny Noviello, Jesus Molina-Veya, Abelardo Avelleda-Delgado, Marie Ange Blaise, Nhon Ngoc Nguyen, Brayan Rayo-Garzon, Maksym Chernyak, Genry Ruiz Guillen, Serawit Gezahegn Dejene. We lost 400,000 Americans fighting the same thing 80 years ago.

**Ethan Bain, *Monsieur Bouc*:** Ethan Bain has been participating in theatre for 10+ years. Some of his favorites that he has been in include *Newsies*, *SpongeBob*, *Rock of Ages*, and *Lion King Jr*. Feel free to follow him on Instagram @ethan.bain2004 to keep up with his acting and music journey!

**Sarah Sexton, *Mary Debenham*:** Sarah has truly enjoyed this fun production and spending time with the cast and crew. Her most recent RCT roles include Catherine in *These Shining Lives* and Sherlock in *Miss Holmes*. In her free time, she loves seeing movies/shows, traveling when she can, and spending time with family, friends, and her multiple rescue cats. She hopes that newcomers to RCT will feel encouraged to get involved and join the fun for themselves!

**Dylan Dalbey, *Hector MacQueen*:** Dylan is very excited to return to the stage. This will be Dylan's twelfth show performing at Richmond Civic Theatre, and first since appearing in *Hello, Dolly!* at RCT. When Dylan isn't at RCT, he works as an automotive technician.

**Mickey White, *Pierre Michel the Conductor*:** Mickey was last onstage at RCT as one of the fathers in *The Fantastics* in 1994. He has been volunteering in the scene shop and designing for RCT since retiring from Earlham College in 2018. His other credits at RCT included numerous set and lighting designs since 1994, playing in pit orchestras (*Little Shop of Horrors*, *Fiddler on the Roof*), and directing *1776* in 1997. He is the recipient of RCT's 2025 prestigious Norbert L. Silbiger Award.

**Robyn Zitnick, *Princess Dragomiroff*:** Robyn is thrilled to put her Russian to use in this show. She has been involved in RCT as well as other area theatres for the last 20 years. She advocates for the Autism community of which she is a proud member. Retired and rattling around in her little Victorian with her cats and a cup of coffee in hand working math problems for fun, she gets out to work part time at the Levi and Katharine Coffin House and to act, sing, dance, and learn.



**Beth Good, Greta Ohlsson:** It's been ten years since Beth's been on stage so this feels like coming out of retirement. She's glad to be back on stage at RCT. It feels like a second home. She's been in productions like *And Then There Were None* as Emily Brent and Mrs. Soames in *Our Town*. She's also been in *The Music Man* and *The Three Musketeers* as well as *Legally Blonde*. Those were all non speaking roles. She has also been in one Radioworks show, *It's a Wonderful Life*.

**Allison Mopps, Countess Andrenyi:** Allison is delighted to be part of this production! She has previously performed in *Gods of Comedy* (Thalia), *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* (Carol), *Breaking the Code* (Pat), and *The Little Mermaid*. She enjoys performing in the pit orchestra for musicals like *Hello Dolly!* and *Newsies* as well. Allison can also be found playing violin with the RCO and bingeing movies/TV shows. She recently became the owner dentist at West Main Family Dentistry!

**Amy Smallwood-Ringenberg, Helen Hubbard:** Amy is happy to be back in the area (and at Richmond Civic Theatre) after a lengthy absence. She spent her formative years in Junior Players and RCT both on and backstage. Amy's favorite roles include Meg in *Little Women*, Margaret Roper in *A Man for All Seasons*, Sheila in *Jake's Women* and most recently as Kimberly in *Much Ado About Murder* for IPA. Amy met her husband Tim during an RCT show and now they live in Richmond with their two cats.

**Electa Berk, Vendor:** Electa is first timer in a theater production. She has read all of Agatha Christie's works, including her books, short stories and plays. *Murder on the Orient Express* is the best of Agatha Christie's works and Electa is proud to be part of the production.

**Nicole Castillo, Vendor:** Nicole steps aboard her first production with a flair for mystery and atmosphere. Drawn to the elegance and intrigue of *Murder on the Orient Express*, she brings quiet creativity both onstage and behind the scenes, helping weave the tension and charm of this unforgettable journey.

**Tammy Bertsch, Vendor:** Tammy is excited to be part of this production and promises she is staying behind the scenes on this one (probably). She has directed two Main Stage Productions, most recently coming off *Rudolph*, and has choreographed several Stage One productions. When not in rehearsal Tammy can be found thinking and talking about theatre or insisting "this will be quick." She hopes you laugh, clap and enjoy the show. Snacks may be involved. Always...YES!

**Victoria Ellison, Vendor:** Victoria is excited to be a part of *Murder on the Orient Express* at Richmond Civic Theatre. In her spare time she enjoys encouraging her kids' passions. She has enjoyed learning how the theatre works, making lots of new friends, and enjoying working on her improv skills. She wants to thank all of her family for being very supportive of her passion for the theatre, especially her daughter for encouraging her to try out.

**Crystal Hernandez, Vendor:** Crystal is new to RCT and thrilled to be part of her first play. With a background in the film industry and a love for behind-the-scenes magic, she's excited to learn theatre from the inside out—from film to stage. She hopes to someday act, direct, or assistant direct. Past credits include being a self-proclaimed Head Usher and a legendary triangle player in RCT's *It's a Wonderful Life*. No role is too small—especially if it involves a triangle.



**Ryan Shaw, Vendor:** Ryan is thrilled to be part of this production alongside his friends and under the direction of his mentor. He most recently appeared in Stage One's adult summer camp production, *Don't Say No to the U.S.O.* Most recently, Ryan directed the Stage One season opener, *Schoolhouse Rock*, and last season's Main Stage opener, *Rock of Ages*. This year proudly marks his 10th year as Stage One Managing Director.

**Elizabeth Vliestra, Vendor:** Elizabeth got her start with RCT a year ago as Mrs Davis in *It's A Wonderful Life*. She grew up performing in school and church productions, and has also been involved with Richmond Radio Theater (*Hamlet* - Ophelia, *Les Miserables* - housekeeper). When not acting, Elizabeth teaches preschool for RCS.

**Phil Baisley, Head Waiter:** Phil is delighted to be shuttling between on stage and backstage in another RCT production. He did that earlier this season as both the Wizard and props assistant in *The Wizard of Oz*. Other recent roles include Uncle Billy in *It's a Wonderful Life: the Musical*, and Leonard Grossman in *These Shining Lives*. He and Jen Brokamp also created the props for *Rock of Ages*. They live outside Richmond with an ark-load of mammals, reptiles, and arachnids.

**Andy Shepherd, Samuel Ratchett:** Andy works as a rehabilitation therapist at Richmond State Hospital. He lives in Richmond with his wife Sarah, three dogs and three cats. Last seen as Val in *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, he will be appearing in his 16th show at RCT with his eighth different accent. Andy enjoys distance running, playing piano, and was a finalist in the 2009 Monopoly National Championship.

**Jessica Beare, Vendor/Crew:** Jessica is excited to be part of *Murder on the Orient Express* as a vendor and backstage as crew. She previously appeared in *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* and loves being involved both on stage and

and behind the scenes. Jessica enjoys contributing to the magic of live theatre and is thrilled to be part of this production. Outside of the theater she enjoys baking, reading, video games, and traveling with her daughter.

**Derek Worch, Announcer/Radio Man:** Derek is thrilled to make his stage debut as the Radio Man in *Murder on the Orient Express*. A high school French teacher, he puts his language skills to use voicing the French broadcasts. He holds a BA in French from Hanover College and has served on the faculty of RHS since 2017 --- teaching all levels of French. Derek also serves on the board of directors of the RHS Alumni Association.

**Jackson Thompson, Colonel Arbuthnot:** Jackson has been a longtime volunteer both onstage and off. He's excited to be back on stage after mostly working crew. He works at a construction company here in Richmond and enjoys art and Legos. It's been a great cast work with and hopes you enjoy the show.

**Ada Smoker, Little Girl:** Ada, a senior at Centerville Senior High School, is thrilled to be part of another production! Recent roles include starring as Dorothy Gale in *The Wizard of Oz*, adult Clarice in *Rudolph*, and getting ready to be the Fairy Godmother in *Decendents*. After years of performing in various productions, Ada looks forward to continuing her theatrical education in college this fall. She hopes you enjoy the show!

**Vicki Martin, Vendor:** Vicki loves theatre and everything that goes into making a production come alive, both on stage and behind the scenes. On the outside, she is a hard-working mother of three, but in here, she sells pistachios.



**Leo Davis, Vendor:** Leo has been away from the theatre for a few years but was frequent when he was younger. Lately he has been more involved in shows such as *Wizard of Oz* and *Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, working backstage and on stage in addition to helping build sets. He loves his involvement and is always looking for more opportunities to help where he can.

**Kathy Clopper, Director:** An RCT volunteer since 1988, Kathy has received two best production awards (*Frankenstein* and *Shrek, the Musical*) and is a Silbiger recipient. She most recently directed *These Shining Lives*. Kathy has served on the RCT board in several capacities including president. Kathy and Simon recently transitioned from a small farm lifestyle to city dwellers in Richmond. They are enjoying city life as well as the company Toulouse and Sammie.

**Sandi Cox, Assistant Director:** Sandi Cox has participated in RCT productions since the 80's. You might have seen her as a music director, pit player, stage manager or an usher. She is a retired music teacher at RCS. She hopes you will enjoy *Murder On The Orient Express* and this terrific cast and great story.

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A vibrant blue poster for the Storybook Cafe Annual Fundraiser. At the top left is a Spider-Man head. The title 'Storybook Cafe' is in a large, stylized font with a silhouette of a person reading. Below it, 'Annual Fundraiser' is written. The date and time 'Saturday April 18th, 10:30-12:00' are prominently displayed. Ticket information 'Tickets: Adults \$15 & Children 12 and under \$20' is shown, along with 'At Eight to the Bar'. A list of activities is provided, including photo ops, library signups, and character interactions. Two children in green costumes are at the bottom right. Logos for sponsors and partners are at the bottom.

**Saturday April 18th, 10:30-12:00**

**Storybook Cafe**

**Annual Fundraiser**

**Tickets: Adults \$15 & Children 12 and under \$20**

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**Tickets go on sale March 13**

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The image is a promotional poster for the Richmond Symphony Orchestra. It features a large, stylized orange 'RS' logo on the left. To the right of the logo, the text reads 'RICHMOND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA with Maestro Andrés Lopera'. Below this, the title 'A Place To Belong' is written in a large, stylized font, followed by '25-26 SEASON'. At the bottom, the website 'www.richmondsymphony.org' is displayed. The background of the poster shows a conductor, Maestro Andrés Lopera, in a dark suit, gesturing with his hands while conducting an orchestra.



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Music Produced by Matthew Tishler

Songs by

Johan Alkenas, Adam Anders, Aristeidis Archontis, Antonina Armato, Howard Ashman, Peer Astrom, Stephen Mark Conley, Doug Davis, Charity Daw, Andrew C. Dodd, Josh Edmondson, Pipo Fernandez, Nikki Hassman, Samuel Hollander, Ben Hostetler, Tim James, Hanna Jones, Jack Kugell, Craig Lashley, Andrew Lipa, Jeannie Lurie, Alan Menken, Grant Phillip Michaels, Anthony Mirabella, Shayna Mordue, Chen Neeman, Susan Paroff, Shelly M. Peiken, Joacim Persson, James K. Petrie, Adam Schlesinger, Adam Schmalholz, Tyler Shamy, Jodie Shihadeh, Nikki Ann Sorrentino, Thomas Armato Sturges, Ali Dee Theodore, Matthew Wong, David Zippel

Based on the Disney Channel Original Movies written by Josann McGibbon and Sara Parriott

Disney's Descendants: The Musical is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).  
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. [www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)

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