

FORT SMITH LITTLE THEATRE



SPOTLIGHT

401 North 6th Street

September 5, 2015

www.fslt.org

Dates: Opening Night Gala of FSLT's production of *Curtain Up On Murder* will be September 17. Regular evening performances will be September 18-19 and 23-26. The Sunday Matinees will be September 20 and 27.

Times: All evening performances begin at **7:30 p.m.** Patrons may be seated after 6:45 p.m. The matinees begin at **2:00 p.m.** Patrons may be seated after 1:15 p.m.

Box Office Hours: The box office is open from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and on Saturdays from 5 to 7 p.m. during the run of the show.

Reservations: Reservations can be made by calling 479-783-2966. Calls will be returned in the order they are received. Reservations will be held until 15 minutes before the show. Gala Tickets are \$25. Tickets for all other performances are \$10.

Season Ticket Holders: Regular season ticket patrons are encouraged to call September 5-9 for preferred seating. They can also reserve a General Admission seat for every Season Ticket they have. General Admission reservations will not be filled until September 10.

Reminder: When you call to make a reservation, Press 2.

CURTAIN UP ON **MURDER**

"It's curtains for you Rocky Curtains!" – Bugs Bunny

At the theatre, nothing is real. Or is it?

In Bettine Manktelow's *Curtain Up On Murder*, the upcoming production directed by Rikkee Black, reality begins to mimic art just a little too closely.

In this thriller, an amateur drama company is rehearsing in its theatre as a storm rages overhead. They find that they are locked inside with no means of escape as real-life drama unfolds. Ghosts appear, the assistant stage manager (Summer Ferguson as Sandra) falls to certain death through a trapdoor, actresses are poisoned, tensions rise, secrets sizzle, and panic ensues.

It becomes obvious a murderer is among those locked in the theatre, but whom can they trust? Who can help? How will they ever make it to morning?

A talented cast loaded with FSLT favorites has kept Director Black in stitches throughout rehearsals for this hilarious British thriller. "It's a mystery set in a theatre; that in itself is perfect," she said.

Ian Miller as Alex, the dashing, conceited leading man, and Melissa Vitale as Sylvia, the beautiful, impractical leading lady, portray the lead roles in this "play

See *Curtain Up On Murder* on page 3





Show Sponsors Applauded

We are so pleased that Smith Auto Group and AT&T will be co-sponsoring our upcoming production of *Curtain Up On Murder*.

Founded in 1938, Smith Auto Group is a full service dealer of new and pre-owned vehicles for Fort Smith, Fayetteville and the surrounding area. With competitive financing, knowledgeable staff, and an excellent service department, Smith Auto Group has earned their reputation for providing quality products at the right price.

AT&T's commitment to innovations in telecommunications is matched by their dedication to improving communities where they live and work. FSLT is grateful to AT&T for their continuing support, and we applaud them as shining examples of caring corporate citizenship.

Director's Letter

I've been volunteering at FSLT since 2007, and in 2011, I directed for the first time. Since then, I've found myself drawn to directing mysteries. I figure it must have started as I grew up watching Masterpiece Mystery Theatre on PBS with my parents, or maybe the twisting movies of Alfred Hitchcock, or maybe when I would cuddle up with a good Nancy Drew book. I could see the characters on the screen and I could see the characters pop up in my mind from the pages of the book. So when looking at potential plays to direct, the same thing has to happen.

As I started reading *Curtain Up On Murder*, it took no time at all for me to picture it on our stage. Even in the early stages of rehearsals, my vision must have been contagious. I'm so very proud of the cast and crew as they have worked hard to bring this script to life. No doubt I speak for all of them when I say—I hope you all enjoy this production of *Curtain Up On Murder* as much as we do.

- Rikkee Black



Curtain Up On Murder opens September 17

continued from page 1

within a play,” rehearsing their scenes before the drama really begins.

Rounding out the cast are Michael Richardson as Martin, the director; Micki Voelkel as Moppet, an actress; Victoria Walden as Linda, Alex’s live-in girlfriend; Cassie Mikel as Ginny, a newbie to the theatre; and Wayne Mathews as Harry, the substitute shop keeper.

To bring the show to life, Director Black will depend a great deal on behind-the-scenes help from her crew which includes: Assistant Director, Eric Wells; Producer/Costumer: Jill Moody-Ledbetter; Stage Manager, Meghan Partain; Set design and Construction, Scott Black; Lights,

Chuck Howard; and Lighting Assistant, JoAnn Rodgers.

Combining humor and suspense, *Curtain up on Murder* is sure to leave the audience guessing as it turns through plot twist after plot twist. “Truthfully, it does what all mystery lovers want; it keeps you guessing the whole way through,” Black said.

While theatregoers won’t know what to guess next, they’ll know it will be curtains for someone.

Make your reservation by calling 479-783-2966 (press 2), and see for yourself whodunit. Show dates are September 17-27, and season ticket patrons are urged to call before September 10.



Tennessee Williams Featured Off-Season

Are you hungry for the writing of Tennessee Williams? Are his works *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Glass Menagerie*, and *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* some of your favorites? Then you won’t want to miss *FOUR BY TENN* to be performed October 1, 2, and 3. Directed by Joe Graham and Mike Papacoda, this off-season production will feature four one-act plays by Williams, the famous American playwright and author of many stage classics.

27 Wagons Full Of Cotton – A Mississippi Delta comedy involving cotton king rivals and revenge. Cast: John Hall, Summer Ferguson, and Joe Velasquez.

The Lady of Larkspur Lotion – Conflict unfolds between a delusional heroine and her brusque landlady. Cast: Micki Voelkel, Suzanne Thomas, and Michael Richardson.

Lord Byron’s Love Letter – In the late 19th century, a love letter reveals a summer of romance long ago. Cast: Lawanda Jones, Kiane French, Meghan Partain, and Brad Kidder.

This Property Is Condemned – This play became a film of the same name starring Natalie Wood and Robert Redford. Cast: Cassie Mikel, and Eric Wells.

First-time Directors Graham and Papacoda have assembled a very experienced crew. Lights-Joseph Reed; Sound-Nathan Stockemer; Costumes - Jill Moody-Ledbetter; Stage Manager-Neal Goodwin; Props-Randy Pace; Producer-Jennie Mathews; and Mentor-Micki Voelkel.

Performances will begin at 7:30 pm. Tickets are \$5 per person at the door. As this is an off-season production, no reservations will be accepted, and admission is not provided by your season ticket.

It’s Important To Press 2

When calling FSLT, **be sure to press 2** if you wish to leave a message for our Box Office volunteers. This applies to all calls to request, change, or cancel a reservation.

No-Shows are a No-No

All reservations are held until 15 minutes before curtain-time, when they may be made available for walk-ins; but, advance notice of a cancellation makes it far more likely that a seat can be filled. If you have a reservation, please call and leave a message if you will be unable to attend. “No shows” are costly. Please do your part to keep our seats full.

Special Thanks

We truly appreciate the vintage clothing that was donated in loving memory of Dale Kirk, a former drama teacher at Vian High School.

Here Comes Season 2016!

As usual, Season Tickets for the next year will be for sale beginning in November. As we prepare to bring you another outstanding line-up, please make note of these opportunities for supporting FSLT in 2016. If you would like more information, call 479-783-2966 and press 4 to leave a message or email info@fslt.org.

- Show Sponsorships or co-sponsorships
- Tuesday (Dark Night) Special Performances available for businesses or non-profit groups
- Advertisements in show programs
- Annual Fund Donations

Fort Smith Little Theatre
SPOTLIGHT

P.O. Box 3752, Fort Smith, AR 72913

www.fslt.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID

Fort Smith, AR
Permit No. 12

2015 FSLT Board of Directors

Carole Rogers - President

Angela Covey - Vice President

Shannon Stoddard - Secretary

Lora Rice - Treasurer

Rham Cunningham

Neal Goodwin

Joe Graham

Victoria Jones

Jennie Mathews

Nikki McDaniel

Nathan Stockemer

Suzanne Thomas

Melissa Vitale

Micki Voelkel

Eric Wells

From the Top...

Is everyone still humming “Over The Rainbow?” No better way to beat the hot summer boredom than to follow the yellow brick road under the spectacular musical direction of George Mann and his wonderful cast and crew. A special thank you to assistant director, Nathan Stockemer, and assistant musical director, Brandon Bolin, who also brilliantly portrayed the Tin Man and Cowardly Lion. Behind the Emerald City were Nancy Blochberger and Vicki Broadway, co-producers, and many more who sewed costumes, painted sets, managed munchkins and more. Bravo to all of you, and thank you for your hard work.

Clicking her ruby slippers, Dorothy reminded us “There’s no place like home.” FSLT has been fortunate to call 401 N. 6th Street our “home” since 1987. While owning such a great facility is a blessing, it is one that requires a substantial budget for ongoing maintenance.

As you may be aware, the City of Fort Smith has discontinued its Outside Agency Funding Program for non-profits for 2016. That program has helped offset our utility expenses for several years. Nevertheless, our Board of Directors recently voted to keep ticket prices at the same level for 2016 because it is our goal to make live entertainment affordable, and therefore accessible, for everyone. As you prepare to purchase your season tickets for next year, please thoughtfully consider a donation to our Annual Fund. For those of you who so generously support FSLT each year— thank you. Hopefully, we can rely on your continued support, as your gifts will be more important than ever.

- Carole Rogers, *President*

Next Up - *Rumors*

Auditions for the FSLT production, *Rumors* by Neil Simon, directed by Valerie Baldwin-Valentine, will be held at the theatre October 5 and 6. The cast calls for 5 females and 5 males all approximately 25-55 years of age. Production dates are November 12-22.

Season Ticket holders are urged to call before September 10 for reservations.