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# ARSENIC & OLD LACE

2024  
SEASON

COMEDY

PRODUCTION NUMBER 255

Aug. 12 — THROUGH — Sep. 21

# HALE CENTER THEATER OREM

◇ PROUDLY PRESENTS ◇

## ARSENIC & OLD LACE

by JOSEPH KESSELRING



### STARRING

James Duncan ◇ Charlie Flint ◇ April Fossen ◇ Rylee Harris  
Matt Kohler ◇ Jon Liddiard ◇ Jayne Luke ◇ Jonathan McBride  
Brianna Meikle ◇ Bradley Moss ◇ Josh Needles ◇ Jordan Nicholes  
Mary Jane Smith ◇ Melany Wilkins

### SUPPORTING

Joel Applegate ◇ Dylan Burningham ◇ Randy Honaker  
Doug Kaufman ◇ Isaac Moss ◇ BJ Oldroyd ◇ Michael Smith  
Hilary Straga ◇ Richie Trimble ◇ Anya Young Wilson



#### SCENIC DESIGN

Jason Baldwin

#### LIGHTING DESIGN

Ryan Fallis

#### COSTUME DESIGN

Kim Wright

#### SOUND DESIGN

Cole McClure

#### HAIR & MAKEUP DESIGN

Janna Larsen

#### DIALECT COACH

Dianna Graham

#### PRODUCTION STAGE MGR.

Jordan Liau

#### PRODUCTION MANAGER

Meagan M. Downey

#### PROPERTIES

Linda Hale, Paul Hintz & Elisabeth Goulding

#### DIRECTOR

Mark Fossen



### ARSENIC & OLD LACE

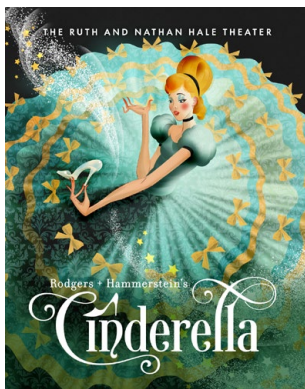
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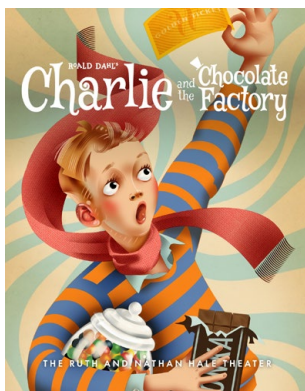
**JUN 13** Through **AUG 02**



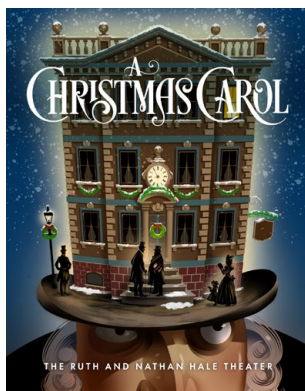
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## ◇ DIRECTOR'S NOTE ◇

When thinking about any show at this theatre this year, it's hard not to see everything in the context of these being the last shows in this historic space. While I've been lucky enough to direct and act here in the past few years, most of my time with this theatre has been in the seats, watching magic be created. Since I started attending in 2005, it's been one of my favorite places to see theatre because the intimacy of the space makes you feel part of the action while the unique limitations of the space call on creativity from every member of the team. Directors like Dave Tinney, the late Chris Clark, Jenny Barlow, and David Morgan have inspired me with their creativity and their ability to make this tiny stage hold giant worlds.

I've seen a boy who would never grow up fly through the air, I've seen dishes and cutlery come to life and fill the stage with dancing, I've seen the Paris Uprising of 1832, ancient Egypt, and a hidden attic in 1944 Amsterdam. I have seen Broadway royalty Audra McDonald and Will Swenson, and I've seen top-notch local talent like Adrien Swenson, Dallyn Vail Bayles, Chase Ramsey, and so many more.

I've also seen two murderous old ladies and their nephew who thinks he's Teddy Roosevelt.

My first time seeing *Arsenic and Old Lace* was sitting in the same seats you are now. I was on the East side, in row 2 or 3 towards the lobby. In fact, I was watching some of the same actors: Jayne Luke and Jon Liddiard were in that 2012 cast and they are back for this one twelve years later. I loved the mix of comedy and suspense, the instantly memorable characters, and the delightful chaos of a "normal" person trying to deal with their decidedly not-"normal" family. I was thrilled when I was given the chance to direct this show in this final season on this stage I love so much.

In 2012, when I first saw *Arsenic and Old Lace*, we were celebrating new seats in the theatre and this year we're also celebrating new seats -- they just happen to be in a new theatre. I distinctly remember those new seats and how comfortable they were. Every seat here is special: from the director's chair to 3 East C & D. We're all sitting together in this theatre that is run with passion and love, and while the location may change, I look forward to us all sitting together next year at The Ruth.

- Mark Fossen

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# ARSENIC & OLD LACE

ABBY BREWSTER .....	Jayne Luke ( <i>MWS</i> ) Mary Jane Smith ( <i>TThF</i> )
MARTHA BREWSTER .....	Melany Wilkins ( <i>MWS</i> ) April Fossen ( <i>TThF</i> )
MORTIMER BREWSTER .....	Jon Liddiard ( <i>MThS</i> ) Jordan Nicholes ( <i>TWF</i> )
ELAINE HARPER .....	Brianna Meikle ( <i>MWF</i> ) Rylee Harris ( <i>TThS</i> )
TEDDY BREWSTER .....	Josh Needles ( <i>MWF</i> ) Charlie Flint ( <i>TThS</i> )
JONATHAN BREWSTER .....	Matt Kohler ( <i>MWS</i> ) James Duncan ( <i>TThF</i> )
DR. EINSTEIN .....	Jonathan McBride ( <i>MWF</i> ) Bradley Moss ( <i>TThS</i> )
OFFICER O'HARA .....	BJ Oldroyd ( <i>MWF</i> ) Doug Kaufman ( <i>TThS</i> )
OFFICER BROPHY .....	Dylan Burningham ( <i>MWF</i> ) Isaac Moss ( <i>TThS</i> )
OFFICER KLEIN .....	Hilary Straga ( <i>MWF</i> ) Anya Young Wilson ( <i>TThS</i> )
MR. GIBBS / MR. WITHERSPOON .....	Joel Applegate ( <i>MWF</i> ) Randy Honaker ( <i>TThS</i> )
REV. DR. HARPER / LT. ROONEY .....	Richie Trimble ( <i>MWS</i> ) Michael Smith ( <i>TThF</i> )

# ◇ SCENE SYNOPSIS ◇

## ARSENIC & OLD LACE

The entire action of the play takes place in the living-room of the Brewster home in Brooklyn.

The time: The present.

### ACT I

An afternoon in September.

Intermission

### ACT 2

That same night.

◇.....COMING SOON.....◇



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Lady

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# ◇ MEET THE CAST ◇

## ABBY BREWSTER



### JAYNE LUKE (MWS)

Jayne Luke played Theresa in *Sister Act*, Aida in *Over the River*, and Abuela in *In the Heights* at HCTO. She loves this little old theater and being directed by Mark Fossen. She has been a theatre professional for 55 years. She played Miss Prism in *Importance of Being Earnest* (Parker Theatre), Mrs. Peacock in *Clue* (HCT and West Valley Arts), and Elizabeth II in *The Audience* (Creekside Theatre Festival). She works at Pioneer Theatre Company, Sundance Summer Theatre, The Grand, and Walk-Ons, Inc..

### MARY JANE SMITH (TThF)

Mary Jane is so happy to be returning to this very special stage in its last season in Orem. She has had many wonderful memories acting here with top notch directors, designers, tech crews, and actors. From *A Christmas Carol* in 2015, to *Music Man* last season, every show has been a treasure for her to be a part of. The icing on the cake is acting with her husband, Michael (Rev. Harper/Lt. Rooney). [@mjs1652](#)

## MARTHA BREWSTER



### MELANY WILKINS (MWS)

Melany is dee-lighted to play Aunt Martha in *Arsenic and Old Lace* for a second time. Other cherished roles include Lady DeBourgh in *Pride and Prejudice*, Clairee in *Steel Magnolias*, Miss Hannigan in *Annie*, Betty in *The Foreigner*, Mrs. Patty in *Curious Savage*, Golde/Yente in *Fiddler On the Roof*, Nana in *Tuck Everlasting*, Emma in *Over the River and Through the Woods*, Ruth in *Pirates of Penzance*, Ida/Miss Skillon in *See How They Run*, Bobo in *The Audience*, various women in *A Christmas Carol*.

### APRIL FOSSEN (TThF)

April was previously seen at HCTO in *Clue* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Other credits include *Medea* (Classical Greek Theatre), *The Audacity* (Plan-B), *Mercury* (Salt Lake Acting Company), *Mother of the Maid* (Pygmalion), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (The Grand), *Stage Kiss* (Wasatch), and *August: Osage County* (Silver Summit). Regional credits include work with Berkeley Repertory Theatre and the California Shakespeare Festival. [@spikerfossen](#)

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# ◇ MEET THE CAST ◇

## ..... MORTIMER BREWSTER .....



### **JON LIDDIARD** (*MThS*)

Jon Liddiard (MFA) was last seen on the HCTO stage as Wadsworth in *Clue*. Other roles at HCTO include Frederick Arnott in *Enchanted April*, Dr. Chasuble in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and Colonel Brandon in *Sense & Sensibility*. Performing credits include: Mr. Darcy in *Pride & Prejudice*, Fince in *The Jawbone's Daughter*, Harry the Horse in *Guys and Dolls*, Ferdinand in *The Tempest*, Oliver in *As You Like It*, and Chris Keller in *All My Sons*. Jon says, "143" to Mer, AJ, OJ and Mimi. [@jonliddiard](#)



### **JORDAN NICHOLAS** (*TWF*)

Jordan is excited to be back on the HCTO stage. Jordan was previously seen at HCTO as Monty in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, Antony in *Enchanted April*, and Algernon in *The Importance of being Earnest*. Some of his favorite past roles have included Peter in *Silent Sky*, Dromio in *Comedy of Errors*, and Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*. He'd like to thank his beautiful wife Rachel for her support and he hopes you enjoy the show.

## ..... ELAINE HARPER .....



### **BRIANNA MEIKLE** (*MWF*)

Brianna is thrilled to be in *Arsenic and Old Lace*! She was last seen on the HCTO stage as Grace Banker in *The Hello Girls*. Other favorite roles include Margo in *Bright Star*, Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*, and Olive Ostrovsky in *Spelling Bee*. Brianna holds a BEA in Musical Theater from Utah Valley University and works at One Voice Children's Choir as a vocal instructor. "Thank you to my wonderful friends and family, especially my husband, for supporting me in all I do!" [@briannameikle](#)



### **RYLEE HARRIS** (*TThS*)

Rylee is excited to be making her HCTO debut! She graduated with a Bachelor's in Theatre Performance from Idaho State University in 2019 and has performed professionally and in the community ever since. Her favorite past roles include Judy Bernly in *9 to 5*, Betty in *White Christmas*, and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Rylee is so grateful for the support of her family—especially her husband, Brock. She hopes you enjoy the show! [@rowlie\\_13](#)

# ◇ MEET THE CAST ◇

## ..... TEDDY BREWSTER .....



### **JOSH NEEDLES** (*MWF*)

Josh Needles is an award winning actor & instructor in Utah. Credits include Collins in *Pride and Prejudice* (HCTO), Sipos in *She Loves Me* (The Noorda), *Mamma Mia* (Sundance), & more. He has a BFA degree in Acting from UVU and also teaches the practice at Utah COPA. He loves what he does & is always grateful to his friends & family; including his husband, Evan, and his puppy, August. Now, CHARGE!  
[@josh.needlesbraun](https://www.instagram.com/josh.needlesbraun)



### **CHARLIE FLINT** (*TThS*)

Charlie was last seen on the HCTO stage as Lt. Ernest Wesson/Man 1 in *The Hello Girls*. Previous HCTO roles include Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol* and Father Dupin in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Additional credits: Laertes in *Hamlet* (Parker Theatre), Lucas in *The Addams Family* (Payson Community Theatre), and Baloo in *The Jungle Book* (Parker Theatre). He is grateful to be able to perform and for the support his family gives him through this process.

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# ◇ MEET THE CAST ◇

## ..... JONATHAN BREWSTER .....



### **MATT KOHLER** (MWS)

Matt is thrilled to be back at HCTO for their final season before moving to The Ruth! Matt was last seen on this stage as the Man in the Yellow Suit in *Tuck Everlasting*. Some of his most recent credits include: Adult Man in *Spring Awakening* (Hart Theatre), Sir Edmund Tilney in *Shakespeare in Love* (West Valley Arts) and Jacob Marley's Ghost in *A Christmas Carol* (HCT). Matt would like to thank his beautiful wife Brooklynn and amazing daughter Ruby for allowing him to play. Happy Wife, Happy Life!



### **JAMES DUNCAN** (TThF)

James is excited to be back at HCTO, where he was last seen as Mr. Bumble in *Oliver!*. Other favorite roles include Jacob Marley's Ghost in *A Christmas Carol* (HCT), Mordcha in *Fiddler on the Roof* (HCT), and Captain von Trapp in *The Sound of Music* (SCERA). James is Senior Counsel at Husch Blackwell, father to three incredible kids, and husband to a gorgeous soprano.

## ..... DR. EINSTEIN .....



### **JONATHAN MCBRIDE** (MWF)

After a seven-year hiatus from performing, Jonathan is thrilled to be getting back on stage. This is his first show at HCTO, and he is honored to play on such a great stage. Past roles include the Baker in *Into the Woods* (HCT West Valley), the Phantom in *Phantom* (HCT West Valley), Bazzard in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (Parker Theatre), and Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Parker Theatre). Love you Fubs! @wanderlust926



### **BRADLEY MOSS** (TThS)

Bradley is excited to be returning to the HCTO stage. He was last seen on this stage as Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* and Constable Joe in *Tuck Everlasting*. Favorite credits include *Fiddler on the Roof* (HCT), *Treasure Island* (HCT), *Murder on the Orient Express* (HCT), *Cinderella* (Sundance Summer Theatre), and directing at HCTO, BYU, and Provo Theatre Company. He works as a Fine Arts Specialist with the Canyons School District. "Love to Shawnda, Ton, Win, Brophy, and Bel. Y'all are the best!"

# ◇ MEET THE CAST ◇

## OFFICER O'HARA



### BJ OLDROYD (*MWF*)

BJ is so thrilled to be back on the HCTO stage, and was last seen as Seitz in *Newsies*. His most recent rolls include Wiesel in *Newsies* (HCT), Bob Cratchit and Christmas Present in *A Christmas Carol* (HCT), Shrek in *Shrek The Musical* (Regalo Theater), and King Arthur in *Spamalot* (Scera). He is a graduate of the Woodbury School of Business at Utah Valley University. He would like to thank his family and friends who support him in his love of dressing up and acting like other people! [@beejo77](#)



### DOUG KAUFMAN (*TThS*)


Doug is thrilled to be back at HCTO with this amazing cast and director! Some of Doug's recent credits include Froggy in *The Foreigner* (HCTO), Adam in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged* (Lehi Arts), Howard in *Moon Over Buffalo* (Covey Arts), Fezzzywig in *A Christmas Carol* (HCTO), and Max in *The Sound of Music* (Alpine). Thanks to the entire *Arsenic and Old Lace* production team for this amazing opportunity, and a big thanks to my amazing family. Love you guys! [@douglkaufman](#)

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# ◇ MEET THE CAST ◇

## OFFICER BROPHY



### DYLAN BURNINGHAM (MWF)

Dylan is honored to make his debut at HCTO! Graduate from the International Stunt School & U of U in Theatre (Actor's Training Program). Credits include: Rob Smith in *The Book Club Play* (Babcock Theatre), Malcolm in *Macbeth* (Studio 115), Thomas Higginson in the World Premiere of *The Emily Dickinson Musical* (Studio 115), Drosselmeyer in *The Nutcracker* (Barlow Arts Conservatory), and Chris Bean in *The Play That Goes Wrong* (SCERA). He thanks his loved ones for their constant support.



### ISAAC MOSS (TThS)

Isaac is so excited to be taking his final bow on the HCTO stage! He was previously seen this season in *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying* and *Seussical!* He is honored to have such a wonderful place to share his time and talents. Favorite credits include *Into the Woods*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *The Pirates of Penzance*. Isaac is a Theatre Ed major at BYU. He sends his love to B, S, A, W, and I for their support.

## OFFICER KLEIN



### HILARY STRAGA (MWF)

Hilary is thrilled to be making her HCTO debut! Credits include: Don John (another gender reversed role) in *Much Ado About Nothing* (Provo Theatre Company), the title character in *Woman in Black* (Echo Theatre), and Lady Catherine de Bourg in Mel Larson's adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (Brigham Young University). She also directed *And Then There Were None* (Echo Theatre). She is ever grateful to her supportive husband Anthony and three remarkable children Mason, Moira, and Marek. [@hastraga](https://twitter.com/hastraga)



### ANYA YOUNG WILSON (TThS)

Anya is thrilled to be in *Arsenic and Old Lace*! What a joy to be a part of this marvelous production. Some of Anya's recent roles include Alice Murphy in *Bright Star*, Maria Reiner in *The Sound of Music*, and Marguerite *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. "All my love to my wonderful family! Oute alofa is oe!"

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# ◇ MEET THE CAST ◇

## ..... MR. GIBBS / MR. WITHERSPOON .....



### **JOEL APPLGATE** (*MWF*)

Joel is honored to be included among this group of exceptional artists. Favorite roles include Detective Rough in *Angel Street* (The Covey), Doc in *West Side Story* (The Grand), Gloucester in *King Lear* and Polonius in *Hamlet* (Renaissance Now Theatre & Film), and Roy Cohn in the ground-breaking *Angels in America* (An Other Theatre). Joel hopes his last act is far from imminent.



### **RANDY HONAKER** (*TThS*)

Randy is excited to be back at HCTO. This retired educator has performed on stages around the valley. Favorite roles include Ben Franklin in *1776*, Maurice in *Beauty and the Beast*, Santa in *ELF the Musical*, and Major General in *The Pirates of Penzance*. "A teacher once wrote on my report card that I seemed to enjoy acting out. I still do! Thanks to my very patient and supportive wife and also to all of you!"

## ..... REV. DR. HARPER / LT. ROONEY .....



### **RICHIE TRIMBLE** (*MWS*)

Richie is excited to be performing in *Arsenic and Old Lace*! Favorite roles: Tarzan in *Tarzan*, Harold Hill in *The Music Man*, Gaston in *Beauty and the Beast*, and Jungle Cruise Skipper at Disneyland. He received a music degree from BYU with an emphasis in sound, and can be found in the HCTO sound booth when he is not on performing. "Thank you to the production team and crew for allowing me to be a part of this production. Most importantly, thank you to my family, especially my daughters Zoe and Mae for being eternally supportive! Please enjoy the show!"



### **MICHAEL SMITH** (*TThF*)

Michael last appeared at HCTO as Mayor Shinn in *The Music Man*. Prior to that appeared on this stage as Monsignor in *Sister Act*, Underling (opposite his wife) in *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and Dr. Chapman in *Cash on Delivery*. He is especially grateful to his wife of 47 years, Mary Jane (Abby Brewster), and to be on stage with her again.

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# ◇ MEET THE TEAM ◇

## DIRECTOR



### MARK FOSSEN

Mark Fossen (Director) is thrilled to return to HCTO and celebrate the final shows in this inspiring theatre. For HCTO, he has directed *Bright Star* and appeared in *A Christmas Carol* as both Marley and Scrooge. Other directing credits include *Our Town*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Pride & Prejudice* and *Sweeney Todd* at The Grand Theatre; *Bellwether*, *Men on Boats* and *The Birthday Party* at Westminster University (where he is an adjunct instructor); *Silent Sky* and *Sweetheart Come* for PYGmalion Productions; and three years of Shakespeare productions for Davis Arts Council. Regional work includes Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre, the California and Idaho Shakespeare Festivals, and Berkeley Repertory Theatre. He is a graduate of the University of Utah and received his MFA from the University of Idaho. [mfossen.com](http://mfossen.com)

## DIALECT COACH



### DIANNA GRAHAM

Dianna Graham has coached 35 shows (and counting), starting with HCTO's *Sense and Sensibility* in 2018. Other shows include *Newsies*, *The 39 Steps*, *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *Matilda*, *Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *Once*, *Bright Star*, *Half-Life of Marie Curie*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Footloose*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Oliver*, *Camelot*, and *A Christmas Carol*. She has a BA in Theatre Acting from BYU and has performed throughout the region for almost 30 years at HCTO, HCT, Tuacahn, Pioneer, Salt Lake Acting Company, Sundance, The Egyptian, UtahRep, West Valley Arts, and the Pink Garter in Jackson, WY, among other venues. Her voice work includes *The Reclaimers' Podcast*, *Miracle on 34th Street* and *Coming Home* on Dramafy.com, and *Reforming Lord Ragsdale* on Audible.com. [DiannaGraham.com](http://DiannaGraham.com)

## PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER



### JORDAN LIAU

Jordan Liau is honored to serve as the Production Stage Manager for *Arsenic and Old Lace*, and recently started as the full-time resident Stage Manager at HCTO. His recent credits include *The Hello Girls* (HCTO); *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (Jackson Hole Playhouse); *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, *Cinderella*, *The Legend of Timpanogas*, *Hansel & Gretel*, *Peter Pan*, and *The Nutcracker* (Utah Metropolitan Ballet); Entertainment Production Manager on Norwegian Star (Norwegian Cruise Lines). [@jord\\_liau](https://twitter.com/jord_liau)

# ◇ MEET THE TEAM ◇

## PRODUCTION MANAGER .....



### MEAGAN M. DOWNEY

HCTO has been a part of Meagan's life for almost as long as she can remember. Born and raised in Orem, she was even a season ticket holder as a child. Meagan began working as a production assistant in 1999 and soon became the theater's resident stage manager. She served in that role until October of 2023 when she became the theater's Production Manager. All her love to her wife Lisa and kids Nora and Graham.

## ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR .....



### JENNIFER HILL BARLOW

Jenny is Hale Center Theater Orem's Associate Artistic Director, Resident Director/Choreographer. For the past 14 years she has directed/choreographed for many Utah theaters and ballet companies. Favorite works include: The US Premiere of *Baz Luhrmann's Strictly Ballroom the Musical* (HCT), *An American in Paris* (HCT), *Daddy Long Legs* (HCTO/HCT), *A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder* (HCTO), and *Xanadu!* (HCTO). She earned an MFA in Choreography/Pedagogy from the U of U, and performed professionally with the Radio City Christmas Spectacular, Cincinnati Ballet, Ballet West, Utah Ballet Company, the Guangzhou Ballet Company in China, and Tuacahn. For 16 years she was the Owner/Artistic Director of the Barlow Arts Conservatory. "Much love to Blake, Dash, and Hudson." [@strawberry\\_blonde\\_ambition](#)

## TECHNICAL DIRECTOR / SCENIC DESIGN .....



### JASON BALDWIN

Jason Baldwin is a scenic designer with over 15 years of experience in theatre as a scenic designer, technical director, and actor. As a graduate of Weber State University, Jason has created captivating visual environments for a diverse array of productions, from intimate regional theatre performances to large-scale musicals. He has been designing for HCTO for many years and serves as its technical director. Some of his credits include productions of *The Music Man*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, *Sweeney Todd*, *In the Heights*, and *Camelot*. Jason's work is celebrated for its meticulous attention to detail, imaginative use of space, and ability to elevate storytelling through striking visual aesthetics. He is thrilled to bring his vision to this production and thanks his family and collaborators for their continuous support.

# Leona Winger

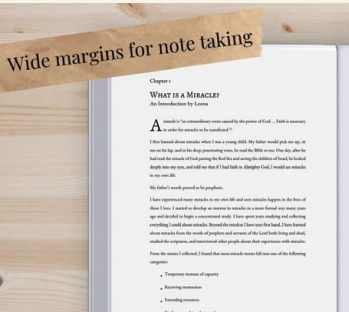
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As Leona’s dying wish, she wanted to publish a book that would inspire you, dear reader, to look for and recognize miracles in your own life. Although Leona is now on the other side of the veil, she has continued to inspire this work to its completion. You, the reader and student, were her vision. This book is her gift to the world and her testimony of the mercy, love, and power of God in the lives of His children.

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# ◇ MEET THE TEAM ◇

## LIGHTING DESIGN



### RYAN FALLIS

*Arsenic and Old Lace* will mark Ryan's final time designing in the current HCTO space. However, he is thrilled to designing the opening production at The Ruth later this year. He is currently pursuing a degree in theatrical lighting at Utah Valley University. Some favorite lighting credits with HCTO include: *Seussical*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *A Christmas Carol* (2023), *Once*, *Pride & Prejudice*, *Enchanted April*, *The 39 Steps*, and numerous Hale Academy productions. Other credits include: *Spring Awakening* (PINK NEON Productions), *Into the Woods* (Utah Valley University), *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Sleepy Hollow: The Musical*, *Little Shop of Horrors* (West Valley Arts), *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *We Will Rock You*, *American Idiot*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, and *Mamma Mia* (Midvale Main Street Theatre). [RyanFallis.com](http://RyanFallis.com) [@ryanfallis.designs](https://www.instagram.com/ryanfallis.designs)

## SOUND DESIGN



### COLE MCCLURE

This marks Cole's 107th show here at HCTO. He has a strong passion for theater and is so grateful to have done what he loves every day for the past 10 years. Cole has worn many hats over the years serving as Sound Technician, Stage Manager, Scenic Design, Sound Design, Costume Design, Technical Director, Automation Design, Projection Design, & Actor just to name a few. Currently Cole serves as the Head of Audio and Residential Sound Designer. He is thrilled to revisit *Arsenic & Old Lace* or "Murder & Old Ladies" as he lovingly calls it, as this was his first show he worked on at the start of his career in theater, 21 years ago. The Hale has become his second family. He is so grateful to the Hale's & Swenson's for keeping him around and can't wait for what the next 10 years brings at The RUTH!!!

## COSTUME DESIGN



### KIM WRIGHT

Kim has been involved in many different areas of the theatrical arts, including performing, directing and choreographing. She has been a costume designer for over a decade. Recent costume designs at HCTO include *Clue* and *The Hello Girls*. Other recent costume design projects at Brigham Young University include *The Boy at the Edge of Everything*, *The Tempest*, *Zemire et Azor*, and *Babe, the Sheep Pig*. She is also an instructor in the Design and Tech area of the Theatre and Media Arts Department at Brigham Young University.

# ◇ MEET THE TEAM ◇

## COSTUME DIRECTOR



### DVORAH GOVERNALE

Dvorah graduated from the University of Central Florida with a BFA in Design & Technology for Theatre. She has worked in scenic, prop, and costume shops for Santa Fe Opera, Universal Studios, Orlando Shakespeare Festival, and more. She later earned her Master's degree while serving as Co-Curricular Faculty in the Costume Shop at Punahou School, where she developed costuming curriculum. Dvorah joined HCTO in fall 2018, helping costume mainstage and youth productions, as well as assisting with community projects, including film work. Some of her favorite costume design projects include *Sister Act*, *The 39 Steps*, *Mulan*, *Moana*, *Frozen*, and *Descendants*. She has also contributed to the design of The Ruth and the new costume shop, preparing for this exciting chapter in our company's history. Dvorah looks forward to creating costume pieces that enhance visual storytelling and support our talented performers each season.

## HAIR & MAKEUP DESIGN



### JANNA LARSEN

Janna has been a hair, makeup & wig designer for many years. Her work has been seen on T.V., film, & live events locally & worldwide. As HCTO prepares to become The Ruth she wishes to thank the producers, directors & co-designers of HCTO for the opportunity to guest design in its final year at this iconic location. Janna has designed many shows for HCTO. She was the full time resident designer for hair, makeup & wigs from 2010-2020. She counts this time and the incredibly talented people she worked with at HCTO among the highlights of her career, and is happy to wish HCTO much success as it becomes The Ruth. Thank you for the memories!

## HAIR & MAKEUP DIRECTOR



### MELINDA WILKS

Melinda has been with Hale Center Theater Orem for over 12 years and is a licensed cosmetologist. Some of her favorite hair and makeup designs have been *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Emma*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *The Hello Girls*. She previously has worked for *Disney's Andi Mack* series and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Conference Center. Working in the hair and makeup department at HCTO is Melinda's dream job and she considers herself incredibly lucky to work with an amazing talented creative team.

# Make an Impact



## THE IMPACT CLUB

The Impact Club is a group of The Ruth's most avid supporters. By becoming a member and investing in The Ruth, you play a crucial role in the impact theater has on our community, our performers and our youth while enjoying exceptional perks such as:

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## The True Crime Story Behind

# ARSENIC & OLD LACE

Written by Mark Fossen

On a chilly January night in 1941, Connecticut State's Attorney Hugh Alcorn found himself in the bustling heart of New York City, about to witness the opening night of a new Broadway play that would hit disturbingly close to home. The audience laughed uproariously, and the critic from *The New York Times* wrote that it was "so funny none of us will ever forget it."

However, Alcorn didn't find it funny at all. Among the nearly 900 people in attendance that night at the Fulton Theatre, he may have been the only one not laughing. His lack of amusement was deeply personal and grounded in a dark chapter of his career. If you had let a serial killer operate under your nose for years, even going so far as to defend the killer when rumors started to spread, you might not find a Broadway show inspired by her very funny. The fact that it features a quartet of cops who are all duped doesn't help either. The seeds for that night were laid many years before by Amy Archer-Gilligan, a seemingly pious woman whose actions would forever change the elder care industry.



Amy Archer-Gilligan



Connecticut State Attorney Hugh Alcorn

Amy Archer-Gilligan was a healthcare pioneer, one of the first to see a need to care for the elderly as family patterns changed in the early 20th Century. No longer could the elderly rely on their families as they used to. The Archer Home for Elderly People and Chronic Invalids in Windsor, Connecticut, was among the first nursing homes and would leave behind a legacy that changed the industry forever. Unfortunately, that legacy was one of licensing and safeguards in order to prevent an Amy Archer-Gilligan from ever happening again.

Born Amy Duggan in 1873, she married James Archer in 1897, and the two became caretakers for an elderly widower, which began their interest in the business of elder care. They eventually bought their own home and began their own business. It was shortly after this that things began to take a dark turn. Amy took out an insurance policy on her seemingly healthy husband only for him to die weeks later of kidney disease. A few years later, she remarried Michael Gilligan, who was a wealthy widower with four sons. Three months after that



The Archer Home for the Elderly.

wedding, Gilligan rewrote his will to leave Amy as the sole beneficiary. One day after that, he too was dead.

Residents of the Archer Home (called "inmates") could pay for their stay weekly for between \$7 and \$25 or could purchase lifetime care for a lump sum of either \$1,000 or by signing over a life insurance policy for the same amount. Upon receiving the lump sum, it was financially advantageous for Amy Archer-Gilligan if the patients died. And they did: between 1907 and 1916, 60 residents died, 48 of them in just the final 5 years of that period. While the police had not caught on, the obituary writer for the Hartford

Courant noticed the strange pattern and alerted his editor. The paper began to do research and found that not only was Archer-Gilligan buying huge amounts of arsenic but sending her patients to purchase it as well. As the paper began to publish stories, Archer-Gilligan complained to State's Attorney Hugh Alcorn that she was being harassed, and he told the paper to stop harassing the seemingly pious pillar of her community.

As time passed and the death toll at the Archer Home continued to rise, pressure mounted on the press and family members, forcing Alcorn to finally agree to exhume some of the bodies of the deceased inmates. All had been poisoned, and Archer-Gilligan was finally arrested and formally charged with the murders of five people. After a trial that gripped the nation, she was convicted a year later and sentenced to be hanged. A stay of execution from the governor earned her a new trial, and this time she pleaded guilty to second-degree murder by reason of insanity and spent the rest of her life in a state hospital for the insane. She was known to sit silently in a black dress with a Bible in her lap and to play funeral hymns on the piano, until her death in 1962 at the age of 94.

Mrs. Archer-Gilligan  
Arrested, Charged  
with Murder

# The Hartford Courant

Fall Today and  
Tomorrow  
Continued from Page 1

Established 1794. VOL. LXXIX, NO. 13333. HARTFORD, CONN., TUESDAY MORNING, MAY 6, 1924. 12 PAGES. PRICE 5 CENTS.

## POLICE BELIEVE ARCHER HOME FOR AGED A MURDER FACTORY MRS. ARCHER - GILLIGAN ACCUSED OF MURDER OF INMATE AUTOPSY SHOWS TWO WHO DIED WERE KILLED BY POISON

**U.S. ACCEPTS GERMAN PROMISE;  
NO CONDITION TO BE CONSIDERED**

Wilson, in Brief Note Cabled Last Night, Informs Berlin Government that Differences With Other Belligerents Cannot Form Subject of Discussion With Germany.

**FOUR MORE IRISH  
LEADERS EXECUTED**

Execution of four more Irish leaders was reported from Dublin last night. The four were James Conboy, James Doyle, James Kelly and James O'Connell.



**LINER CYMRIC SINKING;  
REPORTED AS TORPEDOED;  
CARRIED NO PASSENGERS**

Mrs. Gilligan, Arrested at Her Home Late Yesterday Afternoon, Withstands Grilling by State Police—Body of Franklin R. Andrews, Whom She is Accused of Killing, Disinterred from its Resting Place in Cheshire Cemetery at Night, Shows Death Was Caused by Arsenic, Not Gastric Ulcers, as Stated in Death Certificate—Another Body Also Shows Death by Poison.

### MAY BE 20 WHO HAVE BEEN POISONED

Old Folks Have Come to the Home From All Parts of the State—Woman Has Had Two Husbands—Startling Number of Deaths at Home—Purchases of Arsenic at Windsor Drug Store—Woman Waives Examination—Bodies Taken Away at Night in Violation of Law

Charged with the murder of an inmate of her home for elderly people and believed to have poisoned many other inmates, Mrs. Amy C. Archer-Gilligan of Windsor was arrested late yesterday afternoon by Charles of State Police Station T. Station at the Archer Home on Pleasant Street, Windsor.

The specific charge made in the warrant on which the woman was arrested is murder in the first degree by causing the death of Franklin R. Andrews at the Archer Home on Nov. 24, 1924. The warrant charges that she killed Mr. Andrews with arsenic.

While there are no other charges in the warrant, State's Attorney Hugh H. Alcorn said last night that the state law prohibits the possession of any toxic or lethal drug, state other murders will be included in the charges when the coroner calls for an inquest to be conducted for a date.

When fledgling playwright Joseph Kesselring came to Hugh Alcorn for help writing a play based on the famous case, Alcorn gave him full access to the court documents of the case. Archer-Gilligan refused to give rights to her story, however, so Kesselring started with Alcorn's facts and then turned them into fiction. The resulting play, called *Bodies in the Basement*, was unsettlingly dark and almost devoid of any laughs whatsoever. However, it was only as Kesselring worked with his producers to prepare the play for Broadway that it transformed into the beloved comedy we know today, which was immortalized in the 1944 film starring Cary Grant. The film had been shot in 1941, and its final day of shooting was on the day the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Though these world events delayed the opening of the movie, they underlined director Frank Capra's idea that the screwball comedy contained not only laughs but a message about the secrets and ugliness buried under the respectable veneer of the modern world. ◆



Playbills from the original 1941 Broadway production.



Joseph Kesselring, author of *Arsenic and Old Lace* with some of his brain children.  
Illustrated by Al Hirschfeld  
Published June 15, 1941

## Interested in learning more about Amy Archer-Gilligan?

The definitive book on the case:

*Devil's Rooming House: The True Story of America's Deadliest Female Serial Killer*  
by M. William Phelps

[LINK TO BOOK >>](#)

Podcast interview with M. William Phelps:

*Grating the Nutmeg: A Podcast of Connecticut History*

Episode #177:  
*Murder on Prospect Street*

[LINK TO PODCAST >>](#)

The history of *Arsenic and Old Lace* from Amy-Archer-Gilligan's crimes and trial through the 1944 film:

*There's a Body in the Window Seat!*

by Charles Dennis

[LINK TO BOOK >>](#)



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Classes Start: August 22

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◆ [CLICK FOR MORE DETAILS](#) ◆



### MINI MUSICAL

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**SESSION 1** - Mondays from 2:00 - 2:45 pm

Classes Start: August 19

Cost: **\$70**/Month

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**ELEMENTARY: 3RD-6TH GRADE**

**SESSION 2** - **FULL**

**SESSION 3** - **FULL**

**SESSION 3A** - Wednesdays from 4:00 - 5:15 pm

**NEW**

**JR. HIGH & HIGH SCHOOL:  
7TH-12TH GRADE**

**SESSION 4** - Tuesdays from 4:30 - 5:45 pm

Classes Start: The week of August 19

Cost: **\$80**/Month, **\$175**/Production Fee

**CLICK FOR MORE DETAILS**



## MUSICAL THEATER DANCE COMPANIES

**AUDITIONED - PRE PROFESSIONAL**

**7TH - 12TH GRADE**

**SESSION 1** - Mon & Fri from 3:45 - 5:45 pm

Classes Start: August 19

Cost: **\$125**/Month, **\$325**/Production Fee

**CLICK FOR MORE DETAILS**



## MUSICAL THEATER GROUP VOICE

**1ST - 12TH GRADE**

**SESSION 1** - Mondays from 3:30 - 5:15 pm

Classes Start: August 19

Cost: **\$80**/Month, **\$100**/Production Fee

**CLICK FOR MORE DETAILS**





## HOMESCHOOL MUSICAL THEATER

AGES 13-18

SESSION 1 - Wednesdays from 10:00 - 11:30 am

AGES 8-12

SESSION 2 - **FULL**

Classes Start: August 21

Cost: **\$80**/Month, **\$100**/Production Fee

[CLICK FOR MORE DETAILS](#)



## HOMESCHOOL THEATER

AGES 8-18

SESSION 1 - Thursdays from 10:00 - 11:30 am

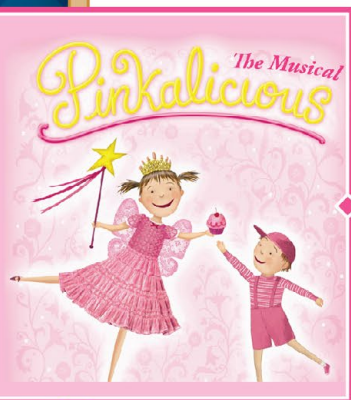
Classes Start: August 22

Cost: **\$80**/Month, **\$100**/Production Fee

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OF THE OPERA

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A dark purple poster for The Phantom of the Opera with a floral pattern. The title "THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA" is in white, with "PHANTOM" being the largest word. The dates "JUL 07 Through JUL 26" are in white, and the "Smith Grand THEATER" logo is in a gold circle.

elf jr.  
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A green poster for elf jr. The Musical with a white feather icon. The title "elf jr. THE MUSICAL" is in white. The dates "DEC 08 Through DEC 20" are in white, and the "THEATER B" logo is in a blue circle.

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- ◆ Doors open 30 minutes prior to each performance, all seats are reserved, and you must be in your seat prior to the performance
- ◆ Late-comers will be seated at the house management's discretion (*Hale Center Theater Orem accepts no responsibility for inconvenience to late-comers*)
- ◆ No children under the age of 4 or babes-in-arms
- ◆ No cell phones, pagers with alarms or other electronic devices
- ◆ Video and audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited
- ◆ No outside food or drink
- ◆ Free parking in our lot or on the street (*Exxon will tow your car*)
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- ◆ Exits are located in the front and rear of the theater
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- ◆ For advertising and promotional opportunities, please contact Sydney Dameron at 801.669.6497
- ◆ For audition schedules, acting and music class schedules and additional theater information visit our website at [hcto.org](http://hcto.org)
- ◆ For fundraising information for your organization contact Brooke Wilkins at 801.226.8600
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