

Audition Information for BLACK COMEDY & THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND

General Information:

- Auditions will be held Wednesday and Thursday, November 18 and 19, 2015
- 7:00pm, at the Mary Hogan Elementary School, 201 Mary Hogan Drive, Middlebury, VT 05753
- Please register by 6:45pm.
- You may audition for either or both shows the same night. Please come to auditions prepared to read from the scripts.
- Perusal scripts are available at the Town Hall Theater Box Office (802-382-9222, Monday-Saturday, noon to 5pm).
- If you are unable to make either audition date, please contact producer or director to schedule another audition time (contact info below).
- Rehearsals will begin after November 28.
- The plays will be presented February 11-14, 2016, at the Town Hall Theater in Middlebury.

Producer Kristen Ginsburg, [802-989-5435](tel:802-989-5435), or kgins@comcast.net

Director Kate Tilton, [802-233-5196](tel:802-233-5196) or katetilton17@gmail.com

Director Trent Campbell, [802-989-8369](tel:802-989-8369), or photos@addisonindependent.com

Peter Shafer's *Black Comedy*, directed by Kate Tilton

What do an aspiring bachelor artist, his giddy, spoiled fiancée, her tightly-wound father, and a repressed spinster have in common with an electrician, an antique collector, an art collector and a still-interested ex-girlfriend? Not one of them can see in the dark, and they've met in the apartment of the bachelor on an evening when a fuse has blown.

Brindsley's apartment, recently outfitted with fine furniture "borrowed" from his art-collecting, vacationing neighbor, Harold Gorringer, is the setting for his meticulously scripted plans for a challenging evening: meeting his future father-in-law, while also showing his artworks to the heady art collector, Georg Bamberger. The evening unravels as carefully laid plans go wildly awry, beginning with the return of Gorringer just as the fuse blows out. Brindsley then must scurry in the dark to return the furniture before his deceit is discovered by the electrician's repair of the fuse.

Black Comedy was written as a one-act by Peter Shafer, and was first presented in 1965. The action supposedly in the dark is illuminated. When the lights are to be on, the stage darkens.

Characters in *BLACK COMEDY*

BRINDSLEY MILLER: A young sculptor (mid-twenties), intelligent and attractive, but nervous and uncertain of himself.

CAROL MELKETT: His fiancée. A young debutante; very pretty, very spoiled; very silly. Her sound is that unmistakable, terrifying deb quack.

MISS FURNIVAL: A middle-aged lady. Prissy and refined. Clad in the blouse and sack skirt of her gentility, her hair in a bun, her voice in a bun, she reveals only the repressed gestures of the middle-class spinster – until alcohol undoes her.

COLONEL MELKETT: CAROL's commanding father. Brisk, barky, yet given to sudden vocal calms that suggest a deep and alarming instability. It is not only the constant darkness that gives him his look of wide-eyed suspicion.

HAROLD GORRINGER: The bachelor owner of an antique-china shop, and BRINDSLEY's neighbor, HAROLD comes from the North of England. His friendship is highly conditional and possessive: sooner or

later, payment for it will be asked. A specialist in emotional blackmail, he can become hysterical when slighted, or (as inevitably happens) rejected. He is older than BRINDSLEY by several years.

SCHUPPANZIGH: A German refugee, chubby, cultivated, and effervescent. He is an entirely happy man, delighted to be in England, even if this means being employed full time by the London Electricity Board.

CLEA: BRINDSLEY's ex-mistress. Mid-twenties; dazzling, emotional, bright and mischievous. The challenge to her to create a dramatic situation out of the darkness is ultimately irresistible.

GEORG BAMBERGER: An elderly millionaire art collector, easily identifiable as such. Like the Electrician, he is a German.

Tom Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound*, directed by Trent Campbell

This one-act features a play within a play. It is both a parody of drawing-room murder mysteries (like Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*) and an absurd examination of two theater critics charged with reviewing the play within the play. The cast includes the two critics, three women and three men, as well as one dead body that is on the stage throughout the play.

Rave reviews greeted this long one act masterpiece of farce when it was recently revived in London with Peter Shaffer's *Black Comedy*. Feuding theatre critics Moon and Birdboot, the first a fusty philanderer and the second a pompous and vindictive second stringer, are swept into the whodunit they are viewing. As mists rise about isolated Muldoon Manor, Moon and Birdboot become dangerously implicated in the lethal activities of an escaped madman.

Characters in *THE REAL INSPECTOR HOUND*

MOON: A second-string theatre critic, called to the production to review it in the absence of Higgs, another critic. Moon's jealousy of Higgs' superior reputation seems to make him question his own purpose, with Moon's ultimate thoughts being of Higgs' death.

BIRDBOOT: A theatre critic and a womanizer, who catapults young actresses to stardom by delivering dazzling reviews in return, we assume, for sexual favors. While married to Myrtle, he is having an affair with the actress who plays Felicity in the play within the play.

Play-within-a-play characters

MRS DRUDGE: The maid, or char, of Muldoon Manor. One of Stoppard's primary vehicles for emphasizing the satirical character of the story. Her cockney accent adds to the humor of Stoppard's play.

SIMON GASCOYNE: New to the neighborhood, Simon has had affairs with both Felicity and Cynthia. He takes an instant dislike to Magnus, as they are both in love with Cynthia. Later in the play, Birdboot assumes the role of Simon Gascoyne, and vice versa.

FELICITY CUNNINGHAM: A beautiful, innocent, young friend of Cynthia's who has had an affair with Simon and Birdboot. She is seemingly sweet and charming, but soon seeks ruthless revenge.

CYNTHIA MULDOON: Apparent widow of Lord Albert Muldoon who disappeared ten years ago. She claims to be very upset about her husband's disappearance, but the audience is led to think otherwise. Sophisticated and beautiful. She has had an affair with Simon.

MAJOR MAGNUS MULDOON: Lord Albert Muldoon's crippled half-brother who just arrived from Canada. Has a desire for his late brother's widow, Cynthia. Takes an instant dislike to Simon, as they are both in love with Cynthia.

INSPECTOR HOUND: Appears from outside the house in the middle of the play to investigate an alleged phone call. Moon assumes this role near the end of the play, and vice versa.