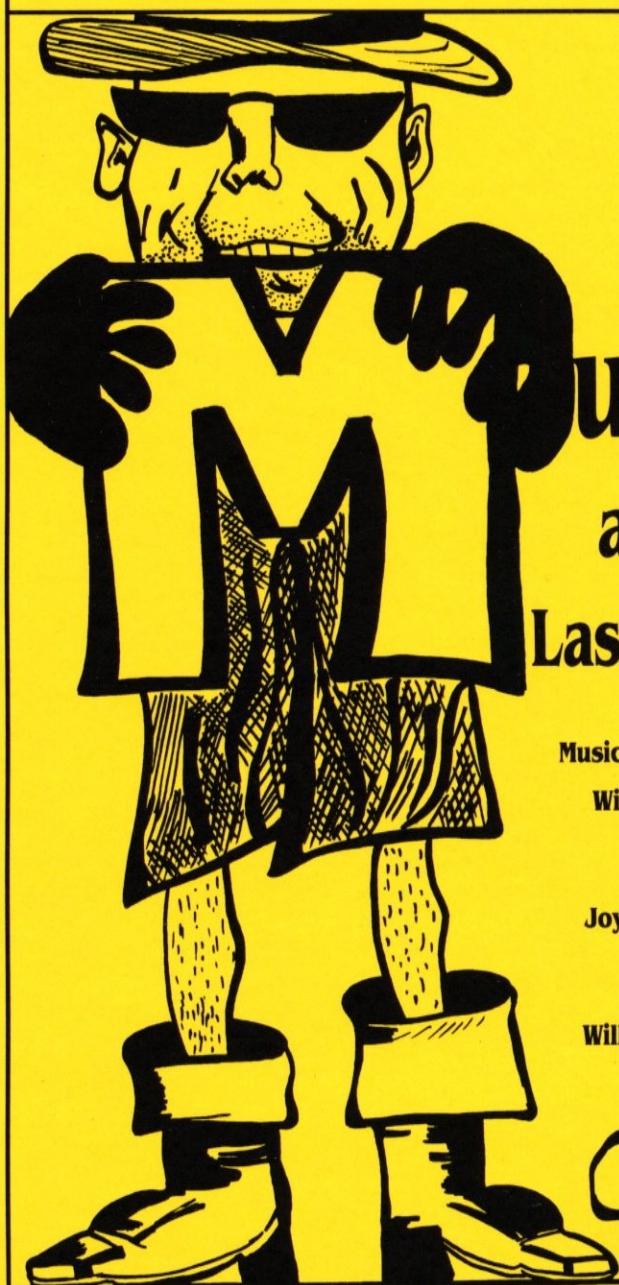


**Bucknell University  
Department of Theatre & Dance  
Presents**



# **Murder at the Last Resort**

**Music & Directing by:  
William Boswell**

**Lyrics by:  
Joyce Hill Stoner**

**Book by:  
William J. Brooke**

**A MYSTERY MUSICAL COMEDY**

**March 11-14, 1994 • Tustin Studio Theatre**



# MURDER AT THE LAST RESORT

## A MYSTERY MUSICAL COMEDY

Book by William J. Brooke

Music by William Boswell

Lyrics by Joyce Hill Stoner

Directed by William Boswell

Sets and Costume Designs by F. Elaine Williams

Lighting Design by Steven A. Draheim

### CAST

in order of appearance

MISTER OTIS ..... Michael Mannequin  
SPARAFUCILE ..... Brian Frutchey  
MOLLY ASHDOWN ..... Laura Payonzeck  
ARTHUR DEKKO ..... Eric Hodgson  
LESLIE MANNING ..... Kate Strauch  
GILES ASHDOWN ..... Caesar Samayoa  
DOTTY, the maid ..... Megan Allen  
THE INSPECTOR ..... Tommy Zappulla

Time: The Seventies

Place: A struggling Poconos resort

*Murder at the Last Resort* is performed with a fifteen-minute intermission. Smoking, the taking of photographs, and the use of recording devices are strictly prohibited. WARNING: A strobe light is used during this performance.

### MUSICAL NUMBERS

#### Act I

Sunrise on the Poconos ..... Dotty, Art, Molly, Giles, and Leslie  
Suspicion ..... Leslie with Dotty, Molly, and Art  
What Will AAA Say? ..... Giles and Molly  
She's Gone Mad ..... Art  
The Inspector's Introduction ..... The Inspector with the cast  
The Confession ..... Art with the cast  
Alone ..... The Inspector, Dotty, Giles  
My Husband Doesn't Understand Me ..... Molly and the Inspector  
The Act ..... Giles  
Doin' It Again ..... The cast

### PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director ..... Tim Steimle  
Musical Director / Pianist ..... William Boswell  
Stage Manager ..... Amy E. Gallagher  
Assistant Stage Manager ..... Kimberly Young  
Lighting TAs ..... Andre Fuqua, Eric Youtz  
Electrics Crew ..... Sal Asta, Devona Botelho,  
Corey Castellani, Jeff Clark, Steve Firestone,  
Steve Herbert, Erik Klingner, Robert Roksandich,  
Peter Templin, David Wensel  
Sound TA ..... James Springer  
Props TAs ..... Donna Carter, Andrea Preschle, Amy Sass  
Costumer ..... Pam Miller  
Costume TAs ..... Ashlynn Billingsley, Bernadette Finnican,  
Mark Minsavage, Laura Pye, Crystal Theesfeld  
Costume Construction ..... Susan Minsavage, Julie Zuckerman,  
Courtney Flaherty  
Set Construction ..... Graham Avila, Adele Conover, Byron Frey,  
David Granger, Tina Hall, Kenneth McClain,  
Mark McGuire, Stephen Roeser, Stefanie Vishab  
Publicity & Box Office ..... Nicole Cobban, Bridgette Mayer,  
Michael Moore  
Poster design ..... Bridgette Mayer  
Light Board Operator ..... Stacy Ayrton  
Follow Spot Operator ..... Tracy Richter  
House Manager ..... Chris Fronheiser, Mark Minsavage  
Ushers ..... Provided by Cap & Dagger

SPECIAL THANKS to Nancy Cook, Weis Center Operations Manager and Bob Reynolds, Weis Center Box Office Coordinator; Kenny Dunkle, Physical Plant; Jeanne Hafer and Ruth Burnham, Langone Center; Mike Lynch; Nancy Stover, Music Department; and the staff at Administrative Services.

### FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE

Shellie Cash-Muller ..... Dance technique and theory  
Steven A. Draheim ..... Technical direction, lighting  
Danna Frangione, director of dance ..... Technique and theory  
Christine Fry ..... Secretary  
Robert Gainer, chair ..... Acting and directing  
Gary Grant ..... Theatre history, theory, directing  
Joel Gori ..... Acting  
Tim Steimle ..... Assistant technical director  
F. Elaine Williams, director of theatre ..... Design



## Act II

I've Been There . . . . . Dotty  
A Fate Worse Than Death. . . . . Art, Giles, and Leslie  
Cloak and Dagger . . . . . The Inspector and Sparafucile  
I Acquiesce . . . . . Leslie  
Men Are All Alike . . . . . Dotty, Molly, and Leslie  
Re: Love . . . . . Giles and Molly  
Finale: Sunset on the Poconos. . . . . The cast

### DIRECTOR'S NOTES

In approaching a work such as *Murder at the Last Resort*, one can only echo what the Inspector himself says in one of the epitomal moments of the drama, "What is truth?" Is this work as mind-numbingly devoid of meaning as it appears on first, second, and third readings to be? Or does it embody in its very superficiality the depths of shallowness which must be plumbed daily merely to traverse the dark waters between sleep and sleep? Wheaties or corn flakes? Does the universe care? Is there in fact a moral imperative at work or might we not all do better to throw up our hands and choose Count Chocula at the giddy breakfast table of life?

These are the questions a director must ask himself. And he must learn to answer with a resounding "Yes." Or in some cases "What?" or "See above."

To create a convincing world for this play to inhabit in an overt attempt to solicit an appropriate emotional response from an audience with a Sesame Street attention span, one must reconcile the styles of such contradictory theatrical genres as murder mystery, historical drama, musical comedy, bedroom farce, suicidal tragedy, anti-feminist diatribe, political manifesto, and opera. How, for example, does a director explain the innocence and glory that was the 1970s to cast members who were pre-pubescent, possibly even pre-verbal, through the entire decade? What does a decidedly sexist farce set in the 1970s have to tell us about the cultural and societal forces that are at work on characters tossed by fate into a Pandora's Box of surreal actuality? In molding actors with so limited a library of life experiences to draw upon, how does one inspire them to scale the depths of an era that dressed Americans eloquently and symbolically in leisure suits, madras shorts, and barrel-bottomed pants?

The director of a work so clearly opaque as this one must strive effortlessly to reconcile the paradox that farce is carefully structured chaos even as our daily Rolodexes overflow with strenuously alphabetized gibberish. He must direct this chaos; as the engineer on the subway to the sub-conscious he must make order out of what seems on its many surfaces to be nothing more than a dated piece of mindlessness. He must never lose sight of the overarching, precisely structured lack of design no matter what cosmic horror is hiding under the bed, no matter what terrible truth will mistakenly slam the next door.

For is not farce in its own way a microcosm of the existential nihilism of the universe itself? Do we not stumble this way and that, pulled endlessly by the gravity of bodies that we imagine to be heavenly? Are we not all molecules trapped in the door-slamming chaos of the sub-atomic dance?

Thus, before we address the heavens above and sod below with more profound inquiries, like "What is the meaning of life?", we must first ask, "What is truth?"

In the non-sequitorial world of farce, the answer must be "Would you repeat the question?"

To which the universe responds with a final, implacable "No."

*William Boswell, director and composer*

### AUTHOR'S NOTES

I thought it was funny.

*William J. Brooke, author*

*The Department of Theatre and Dance, Cap & Dagger, and the director of this production wish to thank the Bucknell University Association for the Arts for supporting the residency of William J. Brooke, author of Murder at the Last Resort, and a man of few words.*

WILLIAM BOSWELL (director, composer) is director of cultural events at Bucknell University and artistic director of the Weis Center for the Performing Arts. Before accepting this position he lived for nearly two decades in New York, working as a theatrical and operatic composer, musical director, director, and arranger, while holding positions as an instructor and administrator in the Conservatory of Music of Brooklyn College of The City University of New York.

WILLIAM J. BROOKE (author) has written several books for young readers, including *A Telling of the Tales* and *Untold Tales*, published by HarperCollins, as well as books nominally for adults, such as *Operantics*, a silly book about opera. Living in New York City, he and his wife are both singers and actors, particularly active in the Gilbert and Sullivan repertory. Mr. Brooke has co-authored musical revues performed off-Broadway, around in the country, and in Canada.

F. ELAINE WILLIAMS (costume/set design) is the director of theatre for the Department of Theatre and Dance and teaches classes in scene, costume, and mask design. She has designed professionally for a number of companies including the Georgia Shakespeare Company, the Academy Theatre, and the horizon Theatre Company in Atlanta, Stage One in Louisville, and the Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble.

STEVE A. DRAHEIM (lighting design) is in his fourth season at Bucknell. He holds an M.F.A. in theatrical design from the University of Minnesota and has worked for a variety of professional theatre companies including the Minnesota Repertory Theatre, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Nebraska Theatre Caravan, and the Guthrie Theatre.



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