

Article published Jul 2, 2015

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson – and Lily Langtry and Oscar Wilde?

By Jim Lowe
Staff Writer

Sherlock Holmes, with his able assistant Dr. John Watson, are enticed to save stage star Lily Langtry from certain ruin over indiscreet letters. At her side is that master of indiscretion himself, Oscar Wilde. To save this damsel in distress, Holmes must defeat his archenemy Dr. Moriarty. Can he succeed?

Dorset Theatre Festival presents "Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily," a mystery-comedy by Katie Forgette, July 9-25 at the Dorset Playhouse, continuing the professional theater's mystery tradition.

Forgette has remained faithful to the Sherlock Holmes of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, but brought in the Wilde influence. For Holmes and Wilde fans, many of the lines will certainly be familiar. For those who aren't, no worry, this is a delicious and witty romp, to say nothing of a baffling mystery.

"There is a reason that Sherlock is such a popular figure in literature as well as on stage and in film," said Dina Janis, DTF artistic director. "These mysteries are engaging throughout and always very satisfying. This piece in particular is so clever and entertaining."

"The Case of the Jersey Lily" places literature's favorite genius detective right in the middle of a blackmail scheme that connects Langtry, the famous actress, celebrated playwright Wilde — just finishing work on his new play, "The Importance of Being Forthright" — criminal mastermind James Moriarty and Queen Victoria herself.

Playing the role of Sherlock Holmes will be Kirk Jackson, last seen at Dorset in "Deathtrap." A Bennington College faculty member, he has appeared on Broadway in Terrence McNally's "Love! Valour! Compassion!" and off-Broadway at the New York Theatre Workshop in Doug Wright's "Quills."

Langtry will be played by Jennifer Rohn, another Bennington faculty member, who has appeared at Dorset in "Superior Donuts," Sherry Kramer's "When Something Wonderful Ends" and the staged reading of "The Bay of Fundy." She was seen on Broadway in "The Crucible." Watson will be played by Christopher Edwards, who has performed at The Guthrie, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Cleveland Playhouse and the Atlantic Theatre, among others.

Oliver Wadsworth, who will portray Wilde, is familiar to regional audiences for his performances at Capital Rep and Dorset's "Noises Off" and "Murder on the Nile." Brian Dykstra, from Dorset's "Good People," who plays the devious Moriarty, recently appeared on Broadway opposite Tom Hanks in Nora Ephron's "Lucky Guy."

Filling out the cast are Carlos Dengler (as John Smythe/Abdul Karim), a recent graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and founding member of the alt-rock band Interpol, and Dana Berger (as Mrs. Tory/ Mrs. McGlynn) who has appeared in "Seminar" at the Kitchen Theatre and in a recurring role on CBS's "Elementary."

Director Margaret Perry is an award-winning director of new plays. She has directed off-Broadway premieres and developed plays with Barrow Street, The Atlantic Theatre and The Public Theatre, among others. She is resident director at The Kitchen Theatre, where she has directed "Sunset Baby," "Seminar" and "Private Lives."

The design team includes Debra Booth, scenic design; David Toser, costume design; Michael Giannitti, lighting design; and Jane Shaw, sound design.

Special Event programming for this production includes a post-show talk-back with the cast and creative team after the July 11 matinee and a talk by Sally Sugarman of the Baker Street Irregulars Society titled "Sherlock Holmes: The Great Detective" at Manchester Community Library at 5:30 p.m. July 21 (tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door). Also scheduled is a special event "Get Your Play On" for local Young Professionals that will feature discounted tickets and café fare including microbrewery beer on July 18.

Dorset Theatre Festival

Dorset Theatre Festival presents "Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily," a mystery-comedy by Katie Forgette, July 9-25 at the Dorset Playhouse, 104 Cheney Road in Dorset. Performances are at 8 p.m. Thursday (preview) and Friday (opening night), July 9-10; 3 and 8 p.m. Saturday, July 11; 3 p.m. Sunday, July 12; 3 and 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 15; 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, July 16-17; 3 and 8 p.m. Saturday, July 18; 3 p.m. Sunday, July 19; 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 21; 3 and 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 22; and 8 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, July 23-25. Ticket are \$49-\$20, \$20 for students; \$8 for 12 and younger; call 802-867-2223, or go online to dorsettheatrefestival.org.