



CTM
Community Theatre Association of Michigan

CALLBOARD

December 2020



Last year's production of Elf by Grand Rapids Civic Theatre!

Counting these Santa impersonators, how many other Santas can you find in this issue? Fabulous prizes awaiting the best guess!

See more holiday productions starting on page 3!

Stagey things to do during the COVID-19 lockdown!

The current lockdown may mean that all live theatre is suspended. But staying indoors doesn't necessarily have to mean a lack of all things stagey. With hit television series and blockbusters starring Broadway and West End greats, check out your favorite performers on screen while we're all in lockdown.

We've listed just some of the ways that we'll be spending our time indoors and how long each activity would take. So, whether you've got a few hours here or there, or you're looking for something to do that takes up all your time, we've got you covered.

[Binge watch all of Glee on Netflix](#)

5 days 1 hour

Join William McKinley High School's Glee Club as they rise up the high school social pyramid to become the biggest names on campus. First released in 2009, *Glee* quickly became a fan favorite with theatre fans; show choirs had never been so glam! If you've never watched *Glee* before, then you'll want to put it at the top of your "to-watch" list. Check out incredible performances by Broadway names like Lea Michele, Darren Criss, and Jonathan Groff in the early seasons, and before you know it, all you'll be listening to is *Glee* covers.

(Continued, page 7)

HELPING COMMUNITY THEATRE *THRIVE* IN MICHIGAN SINCE 1961!



**Community Theatre
Association of Michigan**

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Callboard

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This is the official newsletter of the Community Theatre Association of Michigan, issued monthly to all group affiliates and individual members with e-mail addresses on record. Distribution is by e-mail with a link to the newsletter on the association website. Back issues are available on the association website. Correspondence to the **Callboard** should be sent to the Editor at maryloubritton@gmail.com.

Updated e-mail and postal addresses are maintained by the Administrator and should be sent to CTAMthrives@gmail.com.

In 1606, Shakespeare's theatre was forced to close because of the plague.

So he wrote King Lear,
Macbeth, Antony And
Cleopatra.

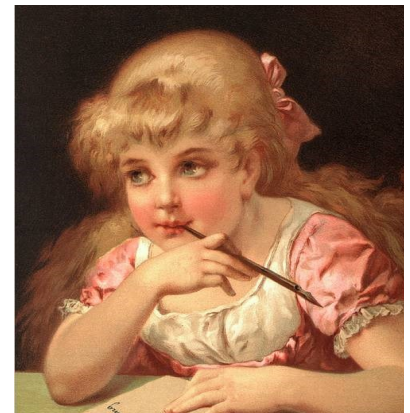
Wash your hands.
Be grateful.
Get better at what you do.

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**Time again for our Annual
Playwriting Contest**

Now that you've sorted your sock drawer, cleaned your closets and the garage, 'tis time to stop procrastinating and put pen to paper. You have lots of time on your hands, so start composing and enter your full-length masterpiece in the 2021 CTAM Playwriting Contest.

The contest starts January 1st and closes May 15th. Rules, suggestions and links to playwriting websites are on the CTAM website - <http://ctam.online/playwriting-contest/> We're waiting for your entry before May 15, 2021.



'Tis the season to be...

We present a sampling of Christmas shows done around the state as our Christmas Card to all of our readers. Especially in these times, our memories of holidays past will get us through the current pandemic. Happy Holidays to one and all!

Right, The Christmas Home Tour, produced in 2019 by 76th Street Players in South Haven.



Below, Grosse Pointe Theatre's production of White Christmas, 2015.





Above, the Nativity scene from the Tawas Bay Players Christmas Songs & Stories program 2019. (Note the real baby Jesus!)



Left, a scene from The Snow Queen, presented by Bay City Players last holiday season in 2019.



The Sauk in Jonesville presented The Homecoming in 2015.





Twin City Players 2016-17 production of Peter and the Star Catcher.

Above, Pit and Balcony Theatre's 2018 production of Every Christmas Story Ever Told (And Then Some)!

Right, an iconic scene from A Christmas Story offered by The Sauk, Jonesville, in 2018.



Below, Youth on Stage from Grosse Pointe Theatre presented Elf, Jr. last year, 2019.



Don't Panic!

*Monthly musings by
Chuck Goddeeris*



As we wind down a tumultuous year, and one that has stricken the theatre industry and its communities harshly, I still find things to be thankful for, especially regarding community theatre. So here is a short list of what I am thank for about community theatre.

First and foremost is the community I have become a part of, both locally and state-wide. After not having done theatre for nearly a decade after I graduated college, I quickly found a home at Rosedale Community Players (RCP). They took me in, let me do my thing, taught me so many things about the aspects of theatre and having essentially a second family. They have trusted me so much that they elected me President a few years ago and they continue to trust me in that position to this day. For that and much more I would like to thank my RCP family.

Secondly, they became a gateway to the community of theatres in metro Detroit. There was at least 15 community theatres in the greater metro Detroit area when I started and pretty much all of them appear to be in good standing to make it through this pandemic. I have done tech for several groups and have always found it difficult (and rare) to turn down the opportunity to work with such great folks from a wide variety of walks in life. I've hosted cast parties for shows I wasn't even involved in and pretty much my entire friends list consists of people I've met doing theatrical productions with throughout the past decade. For that, I'd like to thank the community theatres in the greater metro Detroit for their acceptance, camaraderie and community.

Third, as I learned more from my RCP friends/family and despite being in a theatre-rich environment of metro Detroit I was introduced to the state-wide organization, CTAM, where I discovered I could help and connect with theatre participants across our great state of Michigan. My first introduction to CTAM was through the Fall Conference, where I got to take great workshops, connect with other theatres from around the state and make a whole new batch of friends. I go to every Fall Conference I can and just like I did with RCP they entrusted me to join the Board and eventually be their web-



master, which I still am to this day. And for that I would like to thank my CTAM friends for teaching me so much (and not just about theatre) and for especially honoring me with the Volunteer Spirit award at this past Virtual Fall Conference.

However, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the biennial AACTfest competition. This is one of my favorite aspects of CTAM as it allows us to see shows from all over the state in one weekend. We learn the invaluable tool of adjudication and I always learn something new about what to consider when creating a theatrical production. I can't wait for when it is safe to hold these conferences and festivals again and making even more friends.

In short, I would like to thank everyone I have met through community theatre. I started doing community theatre because I enjoyed the creativity and collaboration opportunities. I continued because of the camaraderie and community of great people I have met and who have become my everyday friends. I look forward to a safer year ahead where we can resume this great passion of ours and performing in front of a live audience again. Stay safe, be smart and may this holiday season keep you healthy and safe so we can meet again and make new friends.



(Continued from Page 1)

[Watch all the Harry Potter movies](#)

1 day 6 hours

Are you a fan of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*? Start all the way back at the beginning and watch all the Harry Potter movies back to back. There's ten in total, including the eight "Harry Potter and..." movies along with two *Fantastic Beasts* titles. It'll take just over a day to complete, but this mammoth task is made easy from stellar performances by the likes of Imelda Staunton, Ralph Fiennes and the main man himself, Daniel Radcliffe.

[Learn all the words sung in Les Misérables](#)

See how quickly you can learn all the lyrics in this musical epic. There are 50 songs in total, including "At The End of The Day," "Bring Him Home," and the anthemic "One Day More." Will you be able to sing all the parts at the same time? We can't say how long it'll take you, but it's guaranteed to keep your brain ticking for a long time.

[Teach yourself a Broadway routine](#)

Imagine you're a Tony Award-winning performer, once you've mastered these iconic routines. Start with *The Lion King*, *Hairspray*, and *Chicago*. When you've memorized these routines, why not get creative and make up your own routines? Who knows, you could become the next Bob Fosse.

[Binge watch Smash on Amazon Prime](#)

1 day 8 hours

Karen and Ivy fight for the chance to play Marilyn Monroe in a brand new Broadway musical in *Smash*. Add to the mix a salacious creative team and backstabbing performers for a recipe that ends up in equal parts success and disaster. If the storyline doesn't interest you, then you'll want to listen to the soundtrack. The original music by *Hairspray*'s Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman will stay in your head for days.

[Watch all three High School Musical movies back to back](#)

5 hours 7 minutes

Okay, so 2020 may not have been the year anyone had expected. There's still a chance to make this year the "Start of Something New" though, as the *High School Musical* trilogy tells audiences. A rite of passage for early 21st century tweens, the movies



NOTE: The Editors are taking a break for a month to celebrate there being no more 2020! There will be no January issue; look for us again for February 2021!

follow a group of high schoolers as they tackle the world around them, doing all they can to make their dreams a reality. Or if like us, you've watched the movies too many times to count, then check them out again to see a baby-faced Zac Efron as the dreamy jock, Troy Bolton. There's a televised sequel too, named *High School Musical: The Musical: The Series*.

[Listen to the Hamilton soundtrack for 24 hours non-stop](#)

After 24 hours of *Hamilton* music being injected into your ears, you'll be shouting "Lafayette!" all around the house. A full day means you'll listen to the soundtrack 13 times through and be in Act 2 of the 14th time. With the fastest rap in all of musical theatre and hidden messages in every song, get ready for this American musical theatre lesson on steroids. When you're done, you can watch the Broadway production on Disney+!

[Read a Shakespeare play](#)

Curl up this lockdown with a good book or two. If you're looking for inspiration, we recommend delving into one of William Shakespeare's classics. Stick with a well-known play like *Romeo and Juliet*, or work your way through his ten histories. Whether you zoom through the pages or you stick to a chapter a day, lockdown will speed by when you're reading his great plays.

Presented as a public service by the Editors and lifted from a TodayTix article online.



The Scoop on Scripts

By Tara Western



I miss community theatre! There, I said it. But no whining. This month, I have scooped a Norm Foster script that I had laying around forever, not knowing what a gem it was and a play with two ladies of a certain age as leads which, as a lady of a certain age myself, doesn't happen very often!

Playwrights Canada Press' *Opening Night* ©1988 is a wonderful comedy by prolific Canadian playwright,

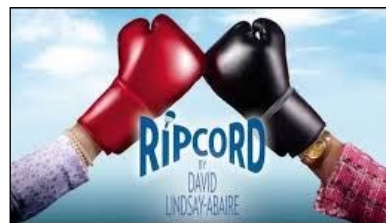


Norm Foster. This is a play within a play, a twofer if you will. A blend of snappy dialogue, some subtle slapstick, and situational humor, make this a fun read and I'd love to see it on-stage someday!

The opening night of *Whisper on the Wind* at the Charles Killian Theatre Repertory House takes place in the VIP lounge, including a stand-up bar and two couches, and the stage set for *Whisper*: two bales of hay, a butter churn and a stump with an axe in it. Theatre boxes on either side allow our characters to view the play while their comments ping-pong across the stage. In the boxes, are Jack and Ruth Tisdale (50s+), celebrating their 25th anniversary, with the tickets that no one in the mayor's office wanted. Stage right we find *Whisper's* author/director, Richard Hyde-Finch (40s+) and his long-suffering girlfriend, Cilla Fraser, 35. Clayton Frye, 40-50s, plays "Ol' Daddy" in *Whisper* and Libby Husniak, 20s plays his daughter. In the lounge, we have Michael Craig, 45+, a disappointed actor and Tom, 20s, a waiter and aspiring actor.

Ruth, wants more out of her marriage; Jack wants to watch the playoffs. Richard hopes for a successful run; Cilla hopes for a commitment. Michael and Tom both want an au-

dition, and Clayton and Libby just want to get through the play. The interactions between the characters in the lounge and on stage, between and DURING the show, are hilarious. When Ol' Daddy tries to pull the axe out, the entire papier-mache stump is raised. Jack, who hasn't been to the theatre ever (?) eats his corn chips, listens to the game, burps audibly, and tries to sell varnish to any and all. Onstage, Libby, the ingénue, freezes; our waiter, Tom, takes her place; light cues are bungled; and Michael appears, having his third nervous breakdown, as he spouts dialogue from *The Tempest*. Reader, I think you will enjoy this play within a play and the audience will be charmed.



Dramatists Play Service's *Ripcord* by David Lindsay-Abaire ©2016 with its cast of three men and three women is

the story of Abby and Marilyn (70s-80s) who reside in the Bristol Place Senior Living Facility in suburban New Jersey.

Abby enjoys her solitude in the coveted and sunny third floor apartment. This bedroom is the main set. When cheery Marilyn moves in, Abby does everything she can to get rid of her. Mad-deningly optimistic, Marilyn proposes a bet: if Abby can make Marilyn angry, Marilyn moves out, but if Marilyn can scare Abby, Marilyn gets the bed by the window. This bet adds several other scenes to the play: a haunted house, an infant's nursery, a park bench, and a sky-diving plane. Many challenges arise due to these scenes, easily solved with a curtain, separate acting spaces, or lights. Also, these additional scenes beget creative challenges with sound, props, and costumes.

The other characters are Scotty, the residential aide, 20s-30s, Marilyn's daughter, 30-40s. Abby's estranged son, Ben, 40s, and Marilyn's son-in-law, 30s-40s. With the exception of Abby, Marilyn, and Scotty, the actors play additional roles in the old ladies' attempts to scare and anger. Truly outrageous scenarios are acted out as the ladies try to trick each other. There are some poignant moments and deeper truths come to light.