

Presented by Messiah University
Department of Theatre and Dance

Poorman Black
Box Theater

Feb. 16-18 at 8:00pm

Feb. 18-19 at 3:00pm



CRIMES OF THE *Fear*

By:

Beth Henley

Directed by:

Ed Cohn

Due to mature subject
content, this play is
not recommended for
children.



**2022-2023
SEASON**

2022-2023 SEASON

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 MESSIAH
UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF
THEATRE AND DANCE

Messiah University Department of Theatre and Dance presents

CRIMES OF THE

Heart

By:

Beth Henley

Directed by: Ed Cohn

Originally produced by the Actors Theatre of Louisville, Inc., in February 1979.

CRIMES OF THE HEART received its New York Premiere at the Manhattan Theatre Club in 1980.

Produced on the Broadway Stage by Warner Theatre Productions, Inc./Claire Nichtern, Mary Lea Johnson, Martin Richards, Francine Lefrak.

CRIMES OF THE HEART is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection. (www.dramatists.com)



DEPARTMENT OF
THEATRE AND DANCE

Mission Statement: As a community of Theatre and Dance artists, we cultivate the stewardship of intellect and imagination in a forum for civic dialogue as we seek to understand our calling in Christ.

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saw tonight, please
spread the word on
social media!**



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ARTISTIC TEAM

Director.....	Ed Cohn
Assistant Director.....	Hannah Wilburn
Stage Manager.....	Elisaveta Alekumova
Scenic Designer.....	Tymberley Whitesel
Costume Designer.....	Elizabeth Angelozzi
Assistant Costume Designer.....	Ashlyn Moore
Lighting Designer.....	Tristan Stasiulis
Sound Designer.....	Erin McCarty
Properties Masters.....	Ella Shane, Clara Bellot, Hannah Lim
Hair and Makeup Designer.....	Julia Itson
Technical Director.....	Benjamin Roberts
Production Manager.....	Patricia DuBois
Publicity Coordinator.....	Bryce Jache

CAST

THURSDAY, FRIDAY, SATURDAY 8PM, AND SUNDAY PERFORMANCES

Lenny.....	Sammi Shuma
Meg.....	Eleanor Mund
Babe.....	Ella Murray
Doc.....	Mason Powers
Barnette.....	Brendon MacNeal
Chick.....	Meredith Gardner
Lenny Understudy.....	Julia Itson
Meg Understudy.....	Gianna Warner
Babe Understudy.....	Ashlyn Moore
Doc Understudy.....	Nathan Steinbach
Barnette Understudy.....	Micah Turner
Chick Understudy.....	Clara Bellot

CAST

SATURDAY 3PM PERFORMANCE

Lenny	Julia Itson
Meg.....	Gianna Warner
Babe.....	Ashlyn Moore
Doc.....	Nathan Steinbach
Barnette	Micah Turner
Chick.....	Clara Bellot
Lenny Understudy	Sammi Shuma
Meg Understudy	Eleanor Mund
Babe Understudy	Ella Murray
Doc Understudy	Mason Powers
Barnette Understudy.....	Brendon MacNeal
Chick Understudy.....	Meredith Gardner

RUNNING CREW

Assistant Stage Manager.....	Lea Ratos
Wardrobe	Rebecca Zheng
Light Board Op	Ella Shane
Sound Board Op	Erin McCarty
House Manager	Bryce Jache

SET & COSTUME CONSTRUCTION

Set and costume construction was completed with the help of the Messiah Theatre and Dance Department Work Study Students.

SPECIAL THANKS

Messiah University Department of Music

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Any photography, videotaping or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

When Beth Henley's *Crimes of the Heart* received the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1981, it made Henley the first woman to receive a Pulitzer for Drama in 23 years, and the first playwright ever to receive the award before the play opened on Broadway. This after she struggled to find a venue for the play. Unknown to her, however, a friend had entered it in the well-known "Great American Play Contest" of the Actors' Theatre of Louisville. The play was chosen as co-winner and performed in February 1979, at the company's annual festival of New American Plays. The production was extremely well-received, and the play was picked up by numerous regional theatres for their 1979-81 seasons before moving to Off-Broadway. Clearly, despite early rejection, her play was resonating with audiences of the day.

Henley chooses to set her play in the small town of Hazlehurst, Mississippi, a town much like the Mississippi town in which she was raised. Interestingly, she chose the year 1974 - shortly after the U.S failed campaign in Vietnam, shortly after the resignation of disgraced President Richard Nixon, amidst the energy crisis, and amidst continued social upheaval. Yet the world of this play seems untouched by all this. These characters seem to live as if it is 1964 rather than 1974. It shows in the patriarchy of their world, even though the most dominant male influences in the lives of the Magrath sisters never even appear in the play. It shows in the "Southernness" of the play, particularly in the sense of public reputation and in the language of the play, language that Henley would know to be distasteful even in 1981. And it also shows in the issues of self-identity among the Magrath sisters.

It is hard to imagine that Henley was not influenced by Susan Glaspell's 1916 play *Trifles*, which also focuses on women surrounding the murder of an abusive husband, possibly by his wife, and also takes place entirely in the kitchen. The play also bears striking similarities to Sam Shepard's 1978 Pulitzer Prize winning play *Buried Child* in its themes of how our "crimes" impact us over time and whose characters also seem untouched by the world beyond them. Perhaps Henley, like Shepard, is asking us to consider how our own past crimes, individually and collectively, are manifest in our present. We may be through with the past. But the past is not through with us.

Ed Cohn, Director

CAST BIOS

Clara Bellot (Chick) is a first-year musical theatre major and is ecstatic to be a part of this amazing show! Previous credits include *Steel Magnolias* (Understudy) *Annie Get Your Gun* (Annie Oakley), and *Once Upon a Mattress* (Lady Larken). She would like to thank God, her mom, family, and the fantastic cast and crew that made this show possible. She hopes that you enjoy the show!

Meredith Gardner (Chick) is a junior history major with a secondary social studies certification. This is her first departmental show at Messiah, and she is so excited to join such an amazing cast and crew for *Crimes of the Heart*. At Messiah, she has performed in *The Exceptional Childhood Center*, *Reclamation x5*, and *New Works for a New World*. She dedicates her performance in this show to God, and thanks Him for the gift of theatre.

Julia Itson (Lenny) is a first-year musical theatre student. Some of her past roles are Marian Paroo in *The Music Man*, Tansy McGinnis in *The Nerd*, and Lina Lamont in *Singin' In the Rain Jr*. When not performing she enjoys reading, playing ukulele, and spending time with her friends and family. She would like to thank Ed for this opportunity and her friends and family for supporting her.

Brendon MacNeal (Barnette) is a junior business administration major with a minor in theatre. In his time at Messiah, he's appeared in the One-Act Festival, *Silent Sky*, and the 2022 Fall Senior Series. He plans on pursuing an MFA in Acting upon graduation. He's so grateful to work with an amazing cast, crew, and directive team. He thanks his family and friends for their endless support and gives all glory to God for this performance.

Ashlyn Moore (Babe) is a sophomore theatre major. Past productions include *Silent Sky* (Annie Cannon Understudy), *Yeomen of the Guard* (Ensemble), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Dogberry, Margaret, Seacoal, and Antonia Understudies), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena), *Eurydice* (Big Stone), and *Ranked: A New Musical* (Jenner). She is grateful to Ed for giving her this opportunity, as well as for her amazing fellow cast and crew mates.

Eleanor Mund (Meg) is a first-year musical theatre major and is thrilled to play Meg in *Crimes of the Heart*. Previous roles include Annie Cannon in *Silent Sky*, Kitty Verdun in *Where's Charley?*, Gertrude in *Hamlet*, and Feste in *Twelfth Night*. In her spare time, she enjoys spending copious amounts of money on her ever-growing earring collection. She would like to thank the cast, crew, and Ed for making this process so wonderful! Enjoy the show!

Ella Murray (Babe) is excited to be back on stage at Messiah after previously playing Shelby in *Steel Magnolias* and performing in *Shoeless Joe* this fall. She has performed with theatres in the Lancaster/Lebanon area including Gretna Theatre, Servant Stage Company, and Piercing Word. Love and thanks to my parents, family, and friends who continue to encourage me to pursue my dreams.

Mason Powers (Doc) is a junior philosophy major and plans to attend law school after his undergrad. His other credits include Benedick in Messiah's production of *Much Ado About Nothing* and the Huntsman in *Snow White*. Mason has loved acting since middle school and hopes to continue doing it for a long time to come! He would like to thank his wonderful cast and amazing girlfriend for helping him learn his lines!

Sammi-Jo Shuma (Lenny), a senior film and musical theatre major, is happy to welcome y'all to this production of *Crimes of the Heart*. It's a pleasure for her to be bringing this story to life with such a passionate cast and crew. Previous shows she has been in are *Silent Sky* (Williamina Fleming), *Yeomen of the Guard* (Dame Carruthers), and *Much Ado About Nothing* (Seacoal, 2nd Messenger). She would like to thank her friends and family for their support.

Nathan Steinbach (Doc) is a cybersecurity major with a minor in theatre. A fun fact about him is that he is a huge *Stranger Things* fan! He is enthusiastic about the ability to perform this show in front of a close-up audience. They'll have the chance to be a "part" of the show. His favorite facet of theatre is the smile he puts on audience's faces, and the feelings they get from the show.

Micah Turner (Barnette) is a junior English major. He has previously starred in the Messiah performances of *Much Ado About Nothing* as Claudio, *The Birds*, and the Parricide and the Prophet. He is thankful for this opportunity, as well as to his friends, family, and girlfriend for their support.

Gianna Warner (Meg) is a first-year musical theatre major who has an amazing opportunity to portray Meg Magrath, her first role at Messiah. Some of her previous roles include Babette (*Beauty and the Beast*), Portia (*R&H's Cinderella*) and Sharpay Evans (*High School Musical*). Gianna is so thankful to the cast and crew of *Crimes of the Heart* for making this possible. She is also very grateful for her friends and family who have supported her career.

SILENT SKY Written by Lauren Gunderson, Directed by Daniel Inouye

When Henrietta Leavitt begins work at the Harvard Observatory in the early 1900s, she isn't allowed to touch a telescope or express an original idea. Instead, she joins a group of women "computers," charting the stars for a renowned astronomer who calculates projects in "girl hours" and has no time for the women's probing theories. As Henrietta, in her free time, attempts to measure the light and distance of stars, she must also take measure of her life on Earth, trying to balance her dedication to science with family obligations and the possibility of love. The true story of 19th-century astronomer Henrietta Leavitt explores a woman's place in society during a time of immense scientific discoveries, when women's ideas were dismissed until men claimed credit for them. Social progress, like scientific progress, can be hard to see when one is trapped among earthly complications; Henrietta Leavitt and her female peers believe in both, and their dedication changed the way we understand both the heavens and Earth. **Poorman Black Box Theater Oct. 6 – 8 at 8pm; Oct. 9 at 3 pm**

SHOELESS JOE Directed by Susan Hurlley

Fall musical theatre cabaret. **Poorman Black Box Theater Oct. 29 at 8pm; Oct. 30 at 3pm**

STEEL MAGNOLIAS Written by Robert Harling, Directed by Elizabeth Angelozzi

Steel Magnolias is set over the span of 3 years and tells the story of a group of friends, neighbors, and clients of hairstylist, Truvy Jones. The beginning of the play focuses on young Shelby who is preparing for her upcoming wedding. As Shelby's story progresses, we learn about her struggles with Type 1 diabetes, and her mother's concern about her leaving the nest and starting a family of her own. Although the ladies argue and tease each other, their friendship and sense of community holds them together. We see this at various points of crisis during the play and, ultimately, at the end when Shelby decision to go against her doctor's orders and have a child has dire consequences.

Miller Theater Nov. 10-12, 18-19 at 8pm; Nov. 13 & 20 at 3pm; *Nov. 17 at 10am special school performance

BLUE CHRISTMAS Directed by Gregg Hurlley

Messiah University dance students acknowledge the struggles and challenges of this broken and fallen world with this lament-driven dance experience. Reflect with us through the medium of dance with this intimate evening of words, music, and dance that will tenderly prepare us all for the joyous season of Advent. **Poorman Black Box Theater Nov. 17 at 7pm**

FALL SENIOR SERIES

An evening of performance created and presented by department seniors. **Poorman Black Box Theater Dec. 2 at 8pm, Dec. 3 at 3pm; Grace Pollock Dance Studio Dec. 9-10 at 8pm, Dec. 10 at 3pm**

SHOELESS JOE Directed by Susan Hurlley

Spring musical theatre cabaret. **Grace Pollock Dance Studio Feb. 4 at 8pm; Feb. 5 at 3pm**

CRIMES OF THE HEART Written by Beth Henley, Directed by Ed Cohn

The scene is Hazlehurst, Mississippi, where the three Magrath sisters have gathered to await news of the family patriarch, their grandfather, who is living out his last hours in the local hospital. Lenny, the eldest, never left Hazlehurst -- she is the caretaker of the sisters' cantankerous Old Granddaddy. Meg, the middle sister, left home to pursue stardom as a singer in Los Angeles, but has, so far, only found happiness at the bottom of a bottle. And Babe, the youngest, has just been arrested for shooting her abusive husband, Zackery Botrelle. Their troubles, grave and yet somehow hilarious, are highlighted by their priggish cousin, Chick, and by the awkward young lawyer who tries to keep Babe out of jail. Under the scorching heat of the Mississippi sun, past resentments bubble to the surface and each sister must come to terms with the consequences of her own "crimes of the heart." **Poorman Black Box Theater Feb. 16-18 at 8pm; Feb. 18-19 at 3pm**

2023 HUMANITIES SYMPOSIUM DANCE CONCERT Directed by Gregg Hurlley

Dancing is a scholarly pursuit. Watch and consider how the dance program tackles the annual Humanities symposium topic in its own unique way. This dance "lecture" explores and examines movement metaphors and images surrounding the idea of migration. **Poorman Black Box Theater Feb. 24 at 4pm; Feb. 25 at 8pm**

INTO THE WOODS Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Book by James Lapine, Directed by Daniel Inouye

Based on the Brothers Grimm most popular folk tales, Into the Woods is a reimagining of what can happen when beloved fairy tale characters are thrown together while pursuing their dreams and wishes. The Pulitzer Prize- and Tony Award-winning team of Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine bring to life characters such as Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, Jack (down from his beanstalk), the Baker and his wife, a pair of princes in search of their brides, and the big bad wolf who is on the lookout for his next meal. It intertwines these stories in increasingly dramatic and humorous ways and asks what comes after the "happily ever after" and whether the journey through the woods was worth it in the end. **Miller Theater March 23-25, 31 & April 1 at 8 pm; March 26 & April 2 at 3pm; *March 30 at 10am special school performance**

SPRING SENIOR SERIES

An evening of performance created and presented by department seniors. **Poorman Black Box Theater April 14 – 15 at 8pm**

CULMINATION '23: SPRING DANCE CONCERT Directed by Gregg Hurlley

Dancing is an artistic endeavor. Celebrate spring and the dance accomplishments of Messiah University's theatre and dance department in an offering of favorite dance pieces from the year, new faculty work, student adjudicated creations, and senior capstone projects all in one fun and glorious dance concert! **Miller Theater April 21 at 8pm; April 22 at 2pm; *April 20 at 10am special school performance**