

THE BACKSTAGE PASS

PASSENGERS OPENS IN FEB.

With a different format than what is usually seen on the PW stage, Sam Bobrick's dramatic comedy *Passengers* will offer something of a change of pace when it opens on Feb. 18, 2022, at the workshop.

Set in a small-town bus station, *Passengers* is a series of 8 short plays, with stories running the gamut from the hilarity to the insightful in what *The Los Angeles Times* called "tickling . . . bittersweet twists . . . worth a ticket purchase."

The same 10 actors—Gene Anderson, Jim Beres, Karen Cahill, Liz Ebbing, Ben Grochowski, Michelle Huppenbauer, Nicole Pappalardo, Herb Price, Sally Price, and Christa Ruther—appear in multiple roles within the 8 plays.

In "Waiting," Anderson, Huppenbauer, Beres, and Cahill portray a story of a disillusioned couple who meet in the bus station; "Baby Feet Frank" has Grochowski, S. Price, and Beres telling the story of a loser who has a drastic plan to turn around his life. In "Old Friends" Anderson portrays a successful businessman who has an encounter with a baglady (Pappalardo). Next is "A Better World" in which a man trying to mind his own business ends up paying a price—it features Ruther, Beres, Cahill, and Grochowski. Sally and Herb Price are featured in "Here's Harry," a merry mix-up in which a widow is trying to get her late husband's ashes; in "The Happiest Bride" Ebbing is a runaway bride and Grochowski is her would-be groom. Jim Beres is the bus driver, and Michelle Huppenbauer is the station's ticket seller in "Without Regrets." The final play "Last Bus" finds Ebbing, Grochowski, Beres, and Pappalardo waiting for the final bus of life.

Passengers is directed by Mary Fox, assisted by JoJo Arms, and is produced by Al Fabel. It will run Feb. 18-20 and 24-27; all performances begin at 7:30 p.m., with the exception of 2:00 matinees on Feb. 20 and 27.

Passengers is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc

Following CDC recommendations, masks will again be required and social distancing observed.

For more information go to the PW Facebook page, check out www.playersworkshoptheater.com, or call 319-753-6623.

THE OUTSIDER WINS THE VOTE!

The reviews are in, and Paul Slade Smith's *The Outsider* is a winner! Congratulations to a talented cast—Jadi Zioui, Tim Lundgren, Anna Short, Wade O'Neal, Chad Bird, Jody Ellison, and Kevin Gobble—production staff—director Libba Flores, asst. director Jayne Gobble, producer Carol Hinkle—and crew—Mary Fox, Randy Wischmeier, Al Fabel, Kent Lewis, Steve Poling, Brittany Gerst, Chris Hinkle, Jean Ballinger, and Chris Gram—for 7 great performances of laughs at Player Workshop.

AUDITIONS--KITCHEN WITCHES

PW will hold open auditions for Caroline Smith's hilarious *The Kitchen Witches* on Feb. 27-28 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the workshop; parts are available for 2 women (40-50 age) and 2 adult males (one in his 30's and the other open), in this wild comedy about 2 rival, female TV chefs, who are forced to work together on the same show. Can you say "food fight?"

Call director Ron Teater at 319-759-2818 for more information, check out the FB page, or go to the website.

PW GETS GRANTS

PW has received 2 grants: \$1500 from the American Rescue Plan Arts Grant, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (part of the National Endowment for the Arts to the Iowa Arts Council on June 21, 2021); this money will go toward meeting CDC requirements for cleaning the theater in the era of the pandemic. Also, a \$2400 grant came from an Iowa Arts & Culture Marketing Grant (part of the Coronavirus Relief Fund created by national CARES Act, granted by Gov. Kim Reynolds to the Iowa Dept. of Cultural Affairs in Sept. 2021); this will be used for additional marketing expenses incurred as a result of the pandemic, "such as remarketing and publicizing of the resumption of activities . . ."

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, contact Gretchen Lewis (753-0470 or kwlawyer@msn.com) to have your name removed from the mailing list. (Prefer an email version? Contact pw6623@gmail.com, to have the newsletter converted to electronic format list.

Players Workshop
P. O. Box 793
Burlington, Iowa 52601

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MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

A new addition to the PW Board is Brittany Gerst, the current secretary. From Mediapolis, she works as the Aflac Administrative Assistant for a local District Sales Coordinator, is married to her husband Zach, and has a “fur kid,” her “silly blue heeler” Zoey.

Although she was a very active part of the CPR committee during the pandemic, and is very grateful to all who participated in the many videos produced and to those who donated financially during that time, Brittany’s main interest at PW lies in the realm of youth theater—she is part of the Youth Committee, where the “main goal . . . is to have a youth-run program that heads the youth productions.” She wants to bring more youth in to PW, saying, “Many of our current members have been a part of the theater for many years, and it is time for the youth to step in and learn from the veterans to broaden the future of theater.”

A lover of art, she paints, sculpts, draws, and does craft projects; she loves games, escape rooms, and the outdoors, feeling “fresh air frees the soul.”

As for PW, Brittany says, “I like to discuss new ideas to enhance and help the theater grow.” And, for herself, she says, “I am very thankful to be where I am right now.”

JOIN PW’S SUPPORTING CAST

Thank you to the following who have joined Players Workshop Honorary Supporting Cast for 2021-2022—the newest members are listed in **bold-faced type**:

STAR--Kyle Warren Ahrold, John Gram.

SUPPORTING ACTOR—Anonymous, David Beckman-Beckman Law, Bonnie Downes, Mary Fox, Kevin & Jayne Gobble, Wayne & Colleen Heibner, Judy Johnson, Chip & Dana Readinger.

STAGE CREW—Mrs. Donald Algood, Chad & Sally Bird, Dick & Vicki Dillon, Alice Hillyer, Earl & Peggy Stott.
USHER--Lois Close, Harry & Linda Hoenig, Donna & Jan Logan.

Their gifts will be recognized in *The Backstage Pass*, in each play program, and on the PW website.

For more information on how to join, go to the PW website or contact PW Pres. Mary Fox (pw6623@gmail.com or at 319-750-6046).

DONATION FORM

Name _____
Address _____
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You may also contribute by clicking on the DONATE button at the top of the PW website (playersworkshoptheater.com) or using the link on the PW Facebook page.

**Send completed form to
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Editor: Bonnie Downes (catlady60450@msn.com)
Circulation: Gretchen Lewis, Rebecca Teater,
& Bonnie Downes
President: Mary Fox
Players Workshop
1431 Grove St. POB 793, Burlington, IA 52601
(319)753-6623