

# **CORPUS CHRISTI COMMUNITY THEATRE**

September 27, 2004

For Immediate Release

## **CORPUS CHRISTI COMMUNITY THEATRE PRESENTS "THE MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS OF 1940"**

HASBROUCK HEIGHTS, NJ - Corpus Christi Community Theatre (CCCT) presents "The Musical Comedy Murders of 1940", a hilarious comedy whodunit, for six performances in October.

Written by John Bishop, the play is set in the library of an isolated country mansion in Chappaqua, New York, in December of 1940. A director, producer, composer, and lyricist have come to pitch their new show to the owner of the estate in the hopes of getting her to back their show. A detective is dispatched to the mansion to uncover the murderer of three chorus girls from their last show.

The adventure and mayhem begin when a sudden blizzard, which causes several power failures, traps everyone at the mansion. Knives spring out of nowhere, dead bodies show up everywhere, and the tables have been turned on the Broadway hopefuls seeking to be backed. With a murderer loose in the mansion, they now find themselves watching their own backs. They have no choice but to find the murderer or be the next victims.

Accusing fingers point in all directions while in every direction revolving, sliding, and swinging bookcases access secret passages. Equally bizarre is that those who die keep reappearing. It is a case of who's who and what's what that keeps both the characters and the audience in laughter and suspense to the very end.

This play, which enjoyed a critically-acclaimed run on Broadway in 1987, pokes fun at the more ridiculous aspects of "show biz" and the corny "murder-in-our-midst" movie thrillers of the 1930s and 1940s.

Murder isn't the only thing suspicious at the mansion. It is 1940 and there's a real fear that Nazis are hiding out, undercover. Could they land in New York too? The twists of comedy, suspense, melodrama, and confusion within the play are endless. The show is filled with memorably funny sight gags, double entendres, and play on words reminiscent of classic "Abbott and Costello" routines.

Bob Shindle, director, notes, "This show was chosen for its comedy, challenging characters, and technical difficulties. The audience is in for a real treat watching and laughing as both the plot and set unravel."

Performances are held at Corpus Christi Auditorium, Kipp Avenue & Boulevard, Hasbrouck Heights. (Enter through the main school entrance on Kipp Avenue.) Six performances are scheduled: Fridays, October 8 and 15 at 8 p.m.; Saturdays, October 9 and 16 at 8 p.m.; and Sundays, October 10 and 17 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each. To reserve seats, call 201-288-5986.

#### About Corpus Christi Community Theatre

This is the eighth year that CCCT brings professional quality theatrical entertainment to the community, complete with fully designed and constructed sets for each show. Past productions have included *Annie Warbucks* (1997), *Irene* (1998), *On the Twentieth Century* (1999), *Rumors* (2000), *Carnival* (2000), *Jerry's Girls* (2001), *Don't Drink the Water* (2002), and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (2003). Productions attract cast and crew participation of talented individuals throughout the tri-state area.

CCCT productions have been nominated by Recognition of Excellence in Community Theater (R.E.C.T.) for five Perry Awards in the categories of outstanding direction, set design, production, costume design, and properties (for which they won an award).

#### Scholarship Fund

In addition to producing quality theatre, CCCT last year established a scholarship fund. To be eligible for the scholarship, the winner must be a student of Corpus Christi School who will be attending a Catholic high school. Criteria for the \$1000 award include talent and display of Christian morals.

## CAST LIST

<u>Character</u>	<u>Performer</u>
Helsa Wenzel	Tracy Costa
Elsa Von Grossenknueten	Betsy Newberry
Michael Kelly	Rich Ruymen
Patrick O'Reilly	Bob Shindle
Ken de la Maize	Bill Schineller
Nikki Crandall	Cheryl Rossillo
Eddie McCuen	James Campion
Marjorie Baverstock	Kimarie Machinga
Roger Hopewell	Jim Mastronardy
Bernice Roth	Kathy Wallace
and	John Calabrese

### Photo Caption:

Murder and mayhem abound at every turn. The cast members scramble to defend themselves and solve the mystery of "The Stage Door Slasher". Moving walls, swinging bookcases, and secret passages add to the fun. Left to right: Tracy Costa, Kathy Wallace, Rich Ruymen, and Betsy Newberry.