

PLAYBILL

UP STAGE
ARTISTS

THE **39** STEPS



Directed By Rick Bergmann

September 15, 16, 22, and 23 at 7:30 pm
September 17 and 24 at 2:00 pm

Where: Emmanuel United Methodist Church
11416 Cedar Lane, Beltsville, MD 20705

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION: THERE WILL BE ASTROBE LIGHT EFFECT USED IN ONE SCENE WHICH MAY BE HARMFUL TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS SUSCEPTIBLE TO EPILEPTIC OR SIMILAR SEIZURE

UPSTAGE ARTISTS PRESENTS THE 39 STEPS

Adapted by Patrick Barlow

From the novel by John Buchan

From the movie by Alfred Hitchcock

Licensed by ITV Global Entertainment Limited

And an original concept by Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon

“The 39 Steps” is presented by arrangement with Concord
Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.
www.concordtheatricals.com

About UpStage Artists

Board of Directors

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Member at Large: Harsha Vardhan

UpStage Artists was formed in July 2019 when a group of artists and friends decided they wanted to create a community theater experience for anyone who wanted to give it a try. Our goal was always to remind those who work with us and those who attend our shows that theater is fun. UpStage Artists is a 501(C)(3) non-profit community theater program dedicated to providing affordable community theater experiences for everyone.

OUR MISSION

- ~To bring high quality theatre and arts programs to the residents of Maryland.
- ~To produce innovative and approachable theatre, classics, as well as new works.
- ~To provide professional level training for actors and lovers of theatre.

Find us on the web at www.upstageartists.com

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Cast

Richard Hanney: Joey Rolandelli

Anabella/Pamela/Margaret: Nancy Somers

Clown 1: Neil Swanson-Chrisman

Clown 2: Colleen Isaiah

Production Team

Director: Rick Bergmann

Assistant Director: Melvin Smith

Stage Manager: Joanne Breen

Stagehand: Jill Robinson

Stagehand: Om Vardhan

Set Design: Rick Bergmann and Joanne Breen

Costumes: Joanne Breen and Cast

Sound and Light Design: Rick Bergmann

Sound Technician: Rick Bergmann

Light Technician: Harsha Vardhan

Fight Choreography: John Cusumano



The Cast and Crew of The 39 Steps

A Note From The Director

The 39 Steps is one of those shows that directors love to watch but, I suspect, are hesitant to direct. It can be daunting, there are 33 scenes, numerous set and costume changes, many moving parts, 78 sound cues, multiple light changes, and 4 performers with hundreds of lines. It's difficult and, at times, stressful but when it begins to come together, it's amazing. I have really enjoyed the experience and it is without a doubt one of the most challenging shows I have ever directed. It has been a fantastic experience though.

The biggest challenge in directing The 39 Steps is how to keep the comedy light, yet broad, while not losing the mystery at the center of the story to the comedy. It's a very difficult balancing act for both the director and the performers. There is an adage that if a director casts the right people, his job is done for him. I am very blessed to have cast the right people. Joey, Nancy, Colleen, and Neil are some of the strongest, energetic, and fun actors I have ever worked with. They truly brought a sense of fun and timing to a very demanding show. I can't imagine doing the show without them. My crew is also fantastic. Melvin, Joanne, Jill, Om, and Harsha didn't blink when I would throw out crazy ideas. It was such a wonderful collaboration between the cast and crew that resulted in something truly special. I am extremely proud to have been able to work beside all of these wonderfully talented individuals.

I hope you enjoy the show that we have put together for you.
Sincerely,

Rick Bergmann

Director

Meet The Cast



Joey Rolandelli as Richard Hanney

Joey Rolandelli is thrilled to be making his Upstage Artist debut in this production of *The 39 Steps*. By day, Joey works for the Baltimore County Department of Aging, and in the evenings, when not rehearsing, can be seen either at trivia or karaoke. Joey has performed with theatre groups all over the Baltimore/DC area in shows like *Shrek*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Sweat*, *Avenue Q*, *Spelling Bee*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Zombie Prom*. Joey would like to thank Rick, Joanne, Melvin, and everyone here at Upstage Artist for the warm welcome and thank his family and friends for their support. Thank Yooooo!



Nancy Somers as Annabella/Pamela/Margaret

Nancy Somers is making her debut with Upstage Artists. Her credits include Catherine in *Boston Marriage* (Dominion Stage), Margo in *Dial M for Murder* (Laurel Mill Playhouse), Mrs. Hardcastle in *She Stoops to Conquer* (Rockville Little Theater), Judith in *Hay Fever* (Globe Open Stage), Gertrude in *Hamlet* (Theater Mints), Lillian in *Isn't it Romantic* (Theater at CBT) and Ms. Shields in *A Christmas Story* (Silver Spring Stage). She is a theater teacher and the drama director at Ridgeview Middle School in Gaithersburg. Nancy is a writer, mother of 4, and world traveler, having been to 28 countries so far.



Colleen Isaiah as Clown

Colleen is excited for her first show with Upstage Artists. You may have seen her in her most recent role as Dolly in *The Colonial Players' "Ravenscroft."* Her past favorite roles include Sid Sawyer in *"Tom Sawyer"*, Anna Mae in *"Meet Vera Stark"*, and Mom in *"The Thing."* Offstage, she enjoys studying residential architecture and interior design.



Neil Swanson-Chrisman as Clown

Neil Swanson-Chrisman is so excited to be returning to Upstage Artists for the 39 Steps. It's been a joy working with the cast and crew bringing Hitchcock's thriller to life. Neil has a degree in theater from the University of Missouri

Kansas City, and taught high-school theater in Kansas City before he moved to Baltimore a decade ago. When not acting, he is involved with Toastmasters International, and likes to play nerd games with his nerd friends, such as Magic the Gathering and Settlers of Catan. Naturally he doesn't have free time ever.

Meet The Crew



Rick Bergmann, Director

Rick has been working in theater for over 30 years, having gotten the acting and directing bug as a teenager. He was previously the President of the Board of Directors of the Prince George's Summer Teen Theater and is now a founding member of

UpStage Artists. Although he prefers to direct, he does occasionally like to step out on stage. Prior to being involved with UpStage, he founded the Parkland Players, the theater troupe for Parkland Magnet Middle School for Aerospace Technology in Rockville. While there, he directed over thirty plays and musicals and the program is still thriving today. He has also directed shows in several local community theaters including Laurel Mill Playhouse and Black Rock Center for the Performing Arts.



Melvin Smith, Assistant Director

Melvin Smith is a North Carolina native who now resides in Prince George's County, Maryland. He has performed in several productions in the DMV area, including productions with Upstage Artists, Silver Spring Stage, Dominion Stage, and The Gaithersburg

Arts Barn with the Kentland Community Players. He is an award winner, having captured the 2021 Broadway Regional Award as Best Performance, for his role as Harold Wilson in A Black and White Cookie. Melvin is excited for the opportunity to help advance community theater through Upstage Artists.



Joanne Breen, Stage Manager

Joanne Breen was born in Winnipeg Manitoba and was quickly nicknamed “the Jumping Bean”!

Gymnastics, dance, and theater have filled her life from a very young age. Tap dancing grabbed her heart at 17 years old, and never let go- having danced and performed wherever she lived-most notably in Portland OR- as a member of The Skylark Tappers, The Portland Tap Connection and Northwest Senior Theatre- (aside from a brief stint in a pre-show performance for the Radio City Rockettes...with the Stellar Dancers Jr Rockettes)! As a lifelong theater buff, and Broadway show aficionado- Joanne is THRILLED to join Upstage Artists Community Theatre and encourages participation for all! Everyone can contribute to the magic of theater- from your theater seat, as a backstage volunteer, as a performer or as a patron- All are welcome! Let’s have fun!



Jill Robinson, Stagehand

Jill is thrilled to be a part of her first Upstage Artists’ show! She has been involved in theatre since early elementary school, performing in all the school shows and choruses she could fit in with the family schedule. Continuing to perform all through high school and college, her favorite roles have been Mrs. Lovett in Sweeney Todd and Nellie Forbush in South Pacific. Jill has performed in most of the Howard County community theatres over the past 20 years living in the area. More recently, she is often found backstage, jumping into local theatres to help with lights, sets or costumes. An engineer by day, Jill spends most of her spare time running ultra marathons and hoping her three young adult children and two dogs are behaving themselves! Much love to husband Bob and the kids!



Om Vardhan, Stagehand

Om has worked with UpStage since 2021 when he was cast as William in Frankenstein. In 2022 he played one of the leads, The Cowardly Lion, in The Wonderful Wizard of Oz. This will be his first time backstage with

UpStage!



Harsha Vardhan, Lighting Technician

Originally from India, Harsha came to the US 14 years ago and currently lives in Maryland, he has been involved in the arts since very young age.

However, growing up, Harsha couldn't pursue his acting career as he had two choices either become an Engineer/Doctor or get Disowned. He chose to be an engineer as he was sick for 3 days after dissecting a cockroach in his science class. Harsha has written several couplets and most recently he has started his own story blog. He likes to go backpacking on Appalachian Trail with his friend, that inspired him to write his story blog (in progress). Harsha likes to do standup comedy as well and has performed few times for family & friends in a limited manner. Harsha is very thankful to his son Om Vardhan as through him he was able to get in contact with the wonderful Upstage-artists team. He is excited to be part of the Upstage Artist team and continue to learn and grow. Harsha wants to implement innovative theatrical experience that not only will entertain but also bring awareness and educate people about arts and certain matters, also help foster the unnoticed/underserved talents in the artistic society.



Thank You!

~Thank you to Valerie and Paul Rolandelli for allowing us to use their vintage wheelchair.

~Thank you to Debbie McNitt for the generous donation of costume pieces

~Thank you to Emmanuel United Methodist Church for providing UpStage Artists with a space to perform. Thank you to Pastor Andrea M. King and the Board of Trustees for being so accommodating.

Thank You To Our Patrons:

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Sunday Morning Hybrid Worship 10 AM

All In-Person Attendees are encouraged to wear a mask

Both in-person and virtual worship are closed captioned

Zoom details can be found on our website

You can also watch the live stream on our Facebook page.

For where 2 or 3 gather in my name, I am there.

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Coming Next Season from UpStage Artists

***Dates TBD and titles are subject to change depending on final approval of rights.



William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing

The world's first Romantic Comedy, Much Ado About Nothing involves bickering lovers, scheming villains, and mistaken identity abound in one of the most hysterical plays of all time. The play revolves around obstacles to the

union of the two young lovers - Claudio and Hero. The love-hate relationship of Beatrice and Benedick features the "merry war" of the sexes. Benedick thinks he hates Beatrice but really loves her and Beatrice thinks she hates Benedick but really loves him.



Twelve Angry Men

Following the closing arguments in a murder trial, the 12 members of the jury must deliberate, with a guilty verdict meaning death for the accused, an inner-city teen. As the

dozen men try to reach a unanimous decision while sequestered in a room, one juror casts considerable doubt on elements of the case. Personal issues soon rise to the surface, and conflict threatens to derail the delicate process that will decide one boy's fate.



Agatha Christie's The Mouse Trap

As news spreads of a murder in London, a group of seven strangers find themselves snowed in at a remote countryside guesthouse. When a police sergeant arrives, the guests discover – to their horror – that a killer is in their midst! One by one, the suspicious characters reveal their sordid pasts.



**Our 2024 Family Show will be
Snow White and The Seven
Dwarves**

All our old friends, plus a few new ones, are here in this classic, marvelous adaptation. We'll meet the captivating Princess Snow White, the prince, the evil queen, and, of course, the seven mischievous dwarfs — Sarge, Gabby, Gloomy Gus, Ticklish, Spritely, Snore, and Slowpoke. There's also a hilarious palace cat and an enchanted vixen — a fox, you could say!

