

Lafayette College Theater Department presents

Miracle on 34TH STREET

Based on the film by George Seaton



Directed by
Michael O'Neill

adapted from the
LUX RADIO THEATER
1947 Christmas Eve Broadcast

Nov. 30 - Dec. 2 @ 7:30 p.m.
Dec. 3 @ 2:00 p.m.



23-24 Season: Reimagining the Classics

A Midsummer Night's Dream - Miracle on 34th Street - The Book Club Play

For tickets, visit lafayette.universitytickets.com, or call (610)330-5009

Miracle on 34th Street

Adapted from Lux Radio Theater Christmas Eve Broadcast 1947

Michael O'Neill

Director

Jake Salgado

Scenic Designer & Projection Designer

Erin Hopwood

Costume Designer, Hair & Makeup Design

Alexander Owens

Lighting Designer & Sound Designer

Tom DiGiovanni '96

Musical Direction

CAST

WTBH Radio Announcer	John White '27	Mrs. Gimbel	Karen Mamaras
Lux Radio Theater Host	Liu They-Them '25	Dr. Pierce	Tiago Brousset '27
Foley	Lily Groff '25	Judge	Gareth Schuster '27
Foley	Kate Stadter '26	Assist. Dist. Attorney	Mara Colman Egan '24
Doris Walker	Carly Johnson '24	Jingles Sister	Samantha Capone '27
Susan Walker	Regan Thompson '27	Jingles Sister	Amanda Forgione '27
Fred Gailey	Xander Walther '27	Jingles Sister	Ella Furniss '24
Kris Kringle	Téo Rodriguez '24	Jingles Sister	Amanda Graf '24
Shellhammer	Ian Horsch '27	Jingles Sister	Benry James '25
R.H. Macy	Jeff Helm	WTBH Pianist	Tom DiGiovanni '96
Alfred	Lucas Phillips '26	WTBH Ukuleles	Amanda Graf '24,
Mrs. Sawyer	Nihan Cedimağar '27	Lui They-Them '25,	Gareth Schuster '27

SHOP CREW

Kylee Brotz, Ani Brutus, Laura Coffey, Owen Eltz, Lily Groff, Aven Lancaster
Lavender Layre, Calum McConnell, Seamus Mcgee, Zoe Ohl, Maddie Perry*,
Sebastiano Rivero*, Kate Stadter, Tony Wanta, Sophia Gal, Téo Rodriguez

Maddie Perry*

Stage Manager

Alexander Owens

Technical Director & Production Manager

PRODUCTION

Assistant Stage Manager
Sound Research
Costume/Hair & Makeup Leads
Costume/Hair & Makeup Crew

Stage & Prop Crew

Light Board Operator
Sound Board Operator
Projection Operator

Christopher Howe '27, Aven Lancaster '26
John Griffith '24
Ani Brutus*'26, & Laura Coffey '26
Ronnie Ward '25, Mariia Romashchenko '27,
Emma Li '27
Kylee Brotz '27, Juliet Minadeo '27, Kailey
Krausz '24
Allison Stein '27
Aven Lancaster '26
Maddie Perry '24

* denotes a member of Alpha Psi Omega National Theatre Honor Society

There is no eating or drinking in the theater. Please turn off all electronic devices.

The play is performed without intermission.

The run time is approximately seventy-five minutes.

PROGRAM NOTES

All other roles, including Macy Shopper, Mortimer, Miss Prong, Mrs. Shellhammer, Tommy, Mara, Mrs. Mara, Charley, Postman, and Louie, are played by Lux Radio Theater actors performing a live radio broadcast in the studios of WTBH.

Live commercials from Lever Brothers Lux Flakes are performed by the Jingles Sisters and members of The Company.

Members of the Company also will create and perform the following: parade goers, Christmas shoppers, children, jitter buggers, reporters, photographers, court gallery, Christmas party guests, and animals—including horses, monkeys, reindeer, and geese.

Miracle on 34th Street is set in the radio studio of WTBH, Easton, Pennsylvania on December 24, 1947, where Lux Radio Theater is broadcasting live on Christmas Eve.

DIRECTORS NOTE

Our production takes place during a fictional live radio broadcast in December 1947, and you, sitting in the Weiss Theater in late 2023, unknowingly have been cast as a member of the studio audience of WTBH in Easton, Pennsylvania. What was the world like for you way back then?

Not a whole different than today, actually. Throughout December 1947, battles raged between Jews and Palestinians in the Holy Land. The President of the United States, Harry S. Truman, faced record low poll numbers as he readied for an election the following year. Inflation challenged housewives at the grocery store, and the cost of housing was rising so fast that returning World War II veterans needed help from the G.I. Bill to secure their first mortgages. Most Americans were fascinated by a newfangled device called television that, within a few years, would be as ubiquitous as cell phones are now. Radio and the movies, however, were still the most popular forms of entertainment nationwide in 1947, and such shows as Lux Radio Theater and CBS Radio Theater brought live theater performances into American living rooms. On December 3, 1947—seventy-six years to the day this production of *Miracle on 34th Street* closes—one of this country's most enduring plays, *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams, opened on Broadway.

In December 1947, recent newlyweds Robert and Virginia O'Neill were preparing for their first Christmas together. Santa Claus came to their house the next year and every Christmas over the following two decades. Our production of *Miracle on 34th Street* is in many ways a thank you note to my parents, Robert and Virginia, and to all parents everywhere who created holiday magic for their children every December, who became children themselves for a few hours each Christmas morning, and taught each of us to believe. As Fred tells Doris in *Miracle on 34th Street*, "Faith is believing in things when common sense tells you not to."

One of the great joys in rehearsing this production has been acting as a time-traveling tour guide for our cast and crew. I don't remember radio very well; I'm a member of the first television generation. Nonetheless, I have been fascinated by the so-called Golden Age of Radio since I directed a production of David Mamet's *The Water Engine* at Wilkes University many years ago. Ideally, you should be able to close your eyes during this show and just listen to get the old radio experience. Please don't, though. Most of the fun is in listening and watching—and in traveling back to 1947 to a nation Kris Kringle describes as Imagination. Right before your eyes and ears, Lafayette students who shake their heads

in disbelief when I tell them I do not know what Tic Toc is will become citizens of that wonderful imaginary place.

They have been guided there as well by our musical director and arranger, Tom DiGiovanni '96, who is doing double-duty in this production as the WTBH studio pianist. Erin Hopwood's costumes, as well as her circa 1947 hair and make-up design, dressed the cast perfectly for the journey back in time. Jake Salgado's scenery and the exemplary technical direction of Alex Owens transport each of you to back to the WTBH Radio studios with such enjoyment that you might end up wishing you could stay a little longer. To each of these consummate professionals, I am as grateful as a boy on Christmas morning. I will miss them all very much.

I made my stage debut at age five or six playing Santa Claus in the annual Christmas play my cousin Joanne and my oldest brother Tim staged for the family in the basement of the house where I grew up in Buffalo, NY. I'm ending the Lafayette College phase of my career with a play featuring Santa Claus and as full of love and laughter as those family Christmas plays of my childhood. As I get ready to retire at the end of this academic year, I am gathering in my imagination all the gifts of my career—each production, each collaborator, and each student whose life has enriched mine. In the words of you-know- who, "Merry Christmas to All, and to All a Good Night!"

-- Michael O'Neill

THE COMPANY

Kira Baker '27 (Costume, Hair & Makeup Crew): This is Kira's (she/her) second play with Lafayette College and she's very excited to continue doing makeup for this and future productions.

Kylee Brotz '27 (Stage & Prop Crew): Kylee (she/her) is a first year student from New Jersey who is planning to major in mechanical engineering.

Tiago Brousset '27 (Dr. Pierce): Tiago (he/him) is a freshman at Lafayette College. He will be playing multiple roles in the show. Outside of acting, he likes boxing and football (soccer).

Ani Brutus '26 (Costume, Hair & Makeup Lead): Ani (they/she) is a sophomore studio art major and architectural studies minor. Ani previously worked on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Ugly Lies the Bone*, *Head Over Heels*. Outside of the Theater Department, Ani manages PR and Social Media for the Lafayette College Arts Society. Most days, Ani can be found in the Williams Visual Arts Building or working with students at EPI (The Experimental Printmaking Institute).

Samantha Capone '27 (Jingles Sister): Samantha (she/her) is a freshman integrative engineering major. She is very excited for her first performance at Lafayette College. She is also involved in Marquis Players, Society of Women Engineers, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Social Gaming Network, Lafayette Happiness Project, LaffCo, and Pottery Club.

Nihan Cedimağar '27 (Mrs. Sawyer): Nihan (she/they) is a freshman and this is her second show at Lafayette College. She previously worked as the light board operator in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. She is a theater and physics major. She is excited to be working on a radio play

for the first time.

Laura Coffey '26 (Costume, Hair & Makeup Lead): Laura (she/her) is a second-year student pursuing a degree in film and media studies. She loves being involved with the Lafayette College Theater Department. Outside of her theatrical endeavors, she devotes her time to her adorable pet rabbit.

Tom DiGiovanni '96 (Music Director): Tom (he/him) music directed his first show right here at Lafayette College as a sophomore in 1993. Michael O'Neill directed that production of *Assassins*, and Tom quickly learned that musicals had the potential to push the boundaries of creative expression. Tom is Artistic Director of *Orchestra360*, Director of *Choirs* at Phillipsburg High School, Musical Director and Organist at Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church and collaborative pianist for LC's Music Department. He holds an MA in Orchestral Conducting from Queens College.

Colman Egan '24 (Assistant District Attorney Mara): Colman (he/him) is a senior math and economics major who is excited to be finishing his acting career at Lafayette with one last production directed by Professor O'Neill.

Ella Furniss '24 (Jingles Sister): Ella (she/her) is a senior chemical engineering major and is thrilled to be a part of her first production with the Lafayette College Theater Department. She recently appeared in the Marquis Players' production of *Footloose* and is also a member of Cadence. Off the stage, Ella is a lifeguard and an aquatic supervisor at the Recreation Center.

Amanda Graf '24 (Jingles Sister/WTBH Ukulele): Amanda (she/her) is the president of Soulfege, one of Lafayette's a cappella groups. This is Amanda's first production with the Lafayette Theater Department.

John Griffith '24 John is a senior theater major from Bryn Mawr, PA. He has worked on several Theater Department productions during his time at Lafayette.

Lily Groff '25 (Foley): Lily (she/her) is a junior theater major focused on technical theater and lighting design. She's worked on shows for Lafayette College Theater and Marquis Players, but this is her first time on this side of the stage.

Jeff Helm (R.H. Macy): Jeff is a faculty member in Lafayette's Mechanical Engineering Department. This is his twelfth production at Lafayette. Previously, Prof. Helm acted in the College productions of *Love Letters*, *Proof*, *Inherit the Wind* and *The Laramie Project*, and designed sets for the productions of *Black Comedy*, *Heddatron*, *Disgraced*, *Metamorphoses*, *Talk Radio*, *Frankenstein 2029* and *Ubu Roi*.

Erin Hopwood Erin (she/her) is a graduate of Kutztown University's Theater Department and has had the opportunity to work at several of

the area's high schools, colleges and universities. Erin started designing at Lafayette in 2011 on the musical *Rent*, and she has costumed and/or designed make-up and hair for many department productions including *The Penelopiad*, *The Grinch*, *Metamorphoses*, *Head Over Heels* and this season's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Ian Horch '27 (Shellhammer): Ian (he/him) is delighted to act in his second play at Lafayette. His previous roles include Egeus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Paris in *Romeo and Juliet*; and Smaug in *The Hobbit*. He's had a blast acting with such a talented troupe of troubadours, thriving in this twinkling tinsel-themed tribute to the timeless tales of theater.

Christopher Howe '27 (Assistant Stage Manager): Christopher is a first year student from Washington, DC. He plans to major in physics.

Benry James '25 (Jingles Sister): Benry (they/them) is a junior studying geology and english. Outside of theater productions, they spend most of their time either in the labs of Van Wickle or in Pardee 101 with the Marquis Literary Magazine. Most recently, they have appeared in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as Mustardseed and in *Love Letters* as Young Melissa.

Carly Johnson '24 (Doris Walker): Carly (she/her) is a senior english and history double major with a passion for drama. This is her second Theater Department production as a castmember and fifth show at Lafayette. She has had an amazing experience with the whole cast and cannot be more excited to share this time with Michael before he retires. She is ecstatic to be able to be part of a Christmas show that bubbles with festive fun.

Kailey Krausz '24 (Stage & Prop Crew): Kailey (she/her) is a senior civil engineering and music double major. Her past work with the Lafayette Theater Department includes assistant stage managing for *Shakespeare's R&J* and performing in *Head over Heels* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Outside of theater, she also regularly performs with Marquis Consort and is an EXCEL research scholar.

Aven Lancaster '26 (Assistant Stage Manager/Sound Board Operator): Aven (he/she) is a sophomore theater major and an Excel scholar for Professor O'Neill. This is her fourth show with the theater department, and first show after serving as the stage manager for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. This is the first radio play he's worked on and it has been a great learning experience.

Emma Li '27 (Costume/Hair & Makeup Crew): Emma (she/her) is a first year theater and international affairs double major. She was previously seen at Lafayette in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and is excited to work on this production.

Karen Marmaras (Mrs. Gimbel): Karen works with Lafayette's CaPA Scholars and serves as the College's Arts Grant Coordinator. She has done countless shows in both community and summer stock venues. Her favorite roles include Marian in *The Music Man*, Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*, Mary Turner in *Of Thee I Sing*, and Rizzo in *Grease*. A long time ago, Karen sang regularly at the Hollywood Savoy in Paris, France.

Juliet Minadeo '27 (Stage & Props Crew): Juliet is a first year student from New York.

Michael O'Neill (Director): Michael most recently directed *Love Letters* in the Weiss Theater. *Miracle on 34th Street* is the forty-fifth and final production he has directed at Lafayette College. Professor O'Neill, who began his Lafayette career in the fall of 1992, will retire at the end of the 2023-24 academic year. He is the author of *Lost Again: A Novel in Stories* (available through Amazon.com) and *Buffalo, Broadway, and Beyond* (forthcoming from City of Light Publishing). Website: www.redhandwriting.com

Maddie Perry '24 (Stage Manager/Projection Board Operator): Maddie (she/her) is a senior theater and mechanical engineering dual degree student. *Miracle* is one of the many shows she's worked on with the Theater Department, and marks her fourth time on a stage management team. She was glad to be able to step into this role when recently asked, and has learned a lot from getting to work with this lively cast.

Lucas Phillips '26 (Alfred): Lucas (he/him) is a sophomore and is happy to be doing his second Lafayette performance. He was also in *Love Letters*, and had enjoyed his experiences acting here at Lafayette College. Lucas wants to thank his family and girlfriend, who are always at his shows.

Téo Rodriguez '24 (Kris Kringle): Téo (he/him) is making his return to acting after not appearing in any shows since high school. Over the past few years he has been developing his rap career, recently dropping his debut album, "For Those Who Waited" on all streaming platforms.

Mary Romashchenko '27 (Costume, Hair & Makeup Crew): Mary (she/her) is a first year English and international affairs double major with a minor in theater. This is her second production with Lafayette College's Theater department, but her first time doing crew. She is very excited to be working on this production.

Jake Salgado (Scenic Designer): Jake (he/they) is thrilled to serve as the Assistant Professor of Scenography at Lafayette College. This show marks his sixth design contribution to the College's Theater

Department, including such productions as *Ugly Lies The Bone*, *Love Letters*, and *Head Over Heels* from the '22-'23 season, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the '23-'24 season. Jake also works outside of Lafayette as a freelance designer for plays, musicals, and live events. He is excited to continue his partnership with the Atlanta, GA based Ballethnic Dance Company to remount their dance piece *Sanctity* at the Alliance Theater as an extension of the Kennedy Center series, *Reframing The Narrative*. Other recent designs from this year include *Shrek the Musical* with Crane River Theatre, in Kearney, NE, along with *Maytag Virgin* and *Souvenir*, both with the Peterborough Players, in Peterborough, NH.

Gareth Schuster '27 (Judge/WTBH Ukulele): Gareth is a first year student from St. Louis, Missouri. He plans to major in integrative engineering.

Kate Stadter '26 (Foley): Kate (she/her) is a sophomore history and computer science student. *Miracle on 34th Street* is her third show at Lafayette, but her first experience acting.

Allison Stein '27 (Light Board Operator): Allison (any pronouns) is a first year student. She participated in theater crew in high school and previously assisted with the costumes for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Lafayette.

Liu They-Them '25 (Lux Radio Theater Host/WTBH Ukulele): It's Christmas season here in the city of Easton and Liu is ready to ring in the merriest time of the year as your favorite radio host. Before their time on the air, Liu played a number of other roles in Lafayette theater productions, including merrily wandering the night in *Midsummer Night's Dream* and cozying up in the dark in *Black Comedy*. Outside of the radio station, Liu is a FAMS and English major who enjoys playing Dnd, reading poetry, and making films.

Regan Thompson '27 (Susan Walker): Regan (she/her) is a first-year at Lafayette College. This is her first involvement in theater at Lafayette.

Alex Thurtle '24 (Program): Alex (they/them) is a senior English & Theater double major with a writing concentration. They are assisting with Professor Lodge's research on musicals and with departmental productions through the EXCEL research scholar program. They have worked on numerous productions with the theater department in the past, and are glad to be working on another.

Xander Walther '27 (Fred Gailey): Xander (he/him) was part of two productions prior to attending Lafayette College. At Lafayette, he is pursuing a psychology major and following his passion for acting and participating in the arts.

Ronnie Ward '25 (Costume, Hair & Makeup Crew): Ronnie is a Gov-

ernment and Law and Theater double major. She has worked on several Lafayette both on stage and behind the scenes. She previously did makeup crew in high school.

John White '27 (WTBH Radio Announcer): John (he/him) is a first year Computer Science major with a double minor in mathematics and history. This is his first production ever, which he's been anticipating for a long while, and he's very excited to be a part of it.

THEATER FACULTY 2023

Mary Jo Lodge

Professor of Theater, Department Head

Michael O'Neill

Professor of Theater

Jake Salgado

Assistant Professor of Theater

Alexander Owens

Technical Director and Production Manager

Brad Lemons

Adjunct Professor of Theater

David Maslow

Adjunct Professor of Theater

Jarrod Yuskauskas

Adjunct Professor of Theater

AUDITION ANNOUNCEMENT

THE BOOK CLUB PLAY

By Karen Zacarias

Directed by Mary Jo Lodge



AUDITIONS
SELF RECORDED
VIDEO SUBMISSION
DUE: DEC 4TH
@8:00PM

CASTING:
-3 FEMALE
-3 MALE
-1 to 5 SINGLE
MONOLOGUE ROLES

(The small roles have a VERY flexible time commitment and only require regular evening attendance during full runs, tech and the run of the show.)

While the characters identify specifically as male and female, actors should audition for the roles that best suit their gender identity. As this is a play, there is no singing.

From Dramatic Publishing: "Loads of laughter and literature collide in this smart hit comedy about books and the people who love them. Ana is a Type A personality who lives in a letter-perfect world with an adoring husband, the perfect job and her greatest passion: Book Club. But when her cherished group becomes the focus of a documentary film, their intimate discussions about life and literature take a turn for the hilarious in front of the inescapable camera lens."

Director: Mary Jo Lodge

The Book Club Play will be performed in the Weiss Theater in Buck Hall at Lafayette College on February 29 and March 1-3rd.

You must be available for all performances. You can be in/work on the Marquis Players' musical *Cabaret*, as this show closes over a month before that show's opening. All cast and crew positions are open, except for stage manager, and academic credit can be earned for roles.

Initial auditions will be self-recorded video submissions. [submit here](#)

Go to the Theater Department website for more information about how to submit auditions and for audition materials. Auditions do not need to be memorized. E-mail Theater Department Administrative Coordinator Cindy Notoroberto (notarobc@lafayette.edu) if you wish to get access to a PDF of the script for the show (reading it prior to auditioning is recommended).

NEW THEATER DEPARTMENT OFFERINGS

Still looking for classes during Winter Interim and the Spring 2024 semester?

January 2024 (Interim REMOTE course):

THTR 286: Theater and Sports

In this course, students will explore the complex relationship between theater and sports, with a particular focus on plays and musicals which feature sports as their subject matter. Students will examine common sports tropes in entertainment, like driven underdogs, and will explore thorny ethical issues related to sports, including doping, cheating and sports betting. Students will also engage with complicated questions about how sports plays engage with gender, sexuality, race and disability. H,V Offered M-Th, 1-4:30p.m.

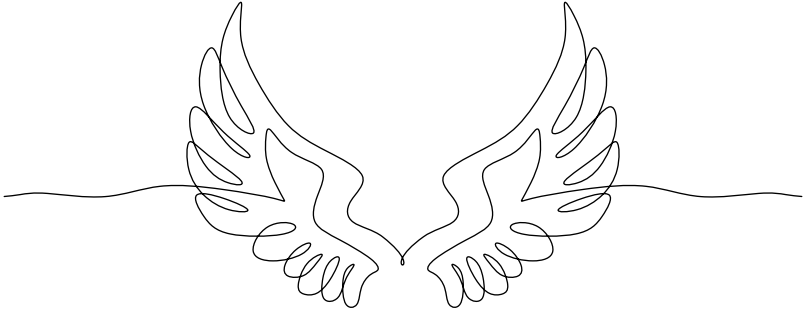
Spring 2024:

THTR 371: Special Topics: Theater, Media & Technology

This class will explore mediated theater, particularly in the wake of the pandemic, and will explore the larger question of how theater has evolved due to changing technology, both historically and today. While theater gradually was incorporating more media (and projections) into productions pre-2020, the shutdown of professional in-person theater and the medium's subsequent embrace of Zoom theater, and pandemic theater, in all of its socially distanced forms, created a fascinating relationship between media and theater driven by technology. In this class, we'll explore phenomena ranging from TikTok musicals (from *Ratatouille* to *Bridgerton* and the Grammys) to television theater from its early days through the National Theatre Live program and will explore thorny issues such as bootleg videos and the wildly viral audition processes for the noted MUNY Theater. This class will also discuss the ethics of merging theater with media (made more urgent by the recent actor and writer strikes), as well as the ways that hybrid mediated theater is becoming its own unique art form. H,V,W. Mary Jo Lodge. TR 11:00am-12:15pm, Studio-248 N. 3rd St.

WE BELIEVE IN ANGELS

In the theater, an angel is a divine person who makes generous donations so theater can happen right here on earth. Support from our Angels has brought in professional designers and choreographers, supported our students competing in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, and sponsored lectures by playwrights.



Theater Angels 2022-2023

Amy P. Ahart
Thomas A. DiGiovanni
Prof. Nancy M. Waters
Dr. Richard S. Koplin
Ms. Carolyn A. Kerr
Mr. Martin J. Robinett
Ms. Keara F. McCarthy
Ms. Margaret K. Frodell
Mr. Brent B. Horowitz
Jay Bradley Ascher
Ms. Carolyn A. Fast
Ms. Brenna Murphy
Mrs. Christina R. Fryman
Mr. David S. Fryman
Dr. Gianna M. Locascio
Dr. C. Beth Wynstra

Ms. Stephanie M. Petersen
Mr. Richard C. Laskey
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Ms. Kristin Dahl Knight
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Mr. Christopher A. Johnston
Melaina Elizabeth Carey
Emily Barnes Taub
Mrs. Mary Anne Fennell Heino
Mr. Robert W. Heino
Mr. Matthew A. Peters
Ms. Hannah C Weaver
Mr. Matthew P. Koos
Mr. Thomas M. Dunlap
Mrs. Leslie Dreyer Kalra
Zeynep Deniz Ozbay