

Agatha Christie's

WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION



March 28-29 & April 4-5, 2025 at 7:30 PM

March 30 & April 6, 2025 at 2:00 PM

Historic Sedgwick County Courthouse



Julie Longhofer
Artistic Director



Stan Longhofer
Managing Director

presents

WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION

by

Agatha Christie

SCENIC DESIGN

JULIE & STAN LONGHOFER

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR & LIGHTING DESIGN

STAN LONGHOFER

COSTUME DESIGN

JULIE LONGHOFER

SOUND DESIGN

KIRK LONGHOFER

*ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, STAGE MANAGER
& INTIMACY DIRECTOR*

SYDNEY ALDER

DIRECTED BY

PAULA MAKAR

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Christie and about other stage adaptations of her stories, please visit:
<http://www.agathachristie.com>.

"Witness for the Prosecution" is presented
by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

www.concordtheatricals.com

Witness for the Prosecution

Cast of Characters

In order of appearance

Carter	VONDA NEWBY-SCHUSTER
Greta	CHELSIE PENNER
John Mayhew	EDDIE SPURLOCK
Leonard Vole	HAGAN SIMMONS
Sir Wilfrid Robarts, Q.C.	MATTHEW GWINNER
Inspector Hearne	CHRIS LOUCKS
Plainclothes Detective	HUNTER BARTHOLOMEW
Romaine Vole	AMY SHELDEN LOUCKS
Clerk of the Court	JENEÉ SAFFOLD
Mr. Justice Wainwright	JORDAN SICKMAN
Mrs. Helena Myers, Q.C.	MICHELE JANSSENS
Warder	HUNTER BARTHOLOMEW
Dr. Wyatt	EDDIE SPURLOCK
Janet McKenzie	VONDA NEWBY-SCHUSTER
Miss Clegg, Forensic Assistant	LYDIA PIRILLI
The Other Woman	LYDIA PIRILLI

The Scenes & Place

Act 1, Scene 1 | *Spring 1953, London*

Sir Wilfrid's Chambers

Act 1, Scene 2 | *Six Weeks Later*

Central Criminal Court ("The Old Bailey")

There will be a 15-minute intermission.

Act 2, Scene 1 | *Immediately Following*

Act 2, Scene 2 | *Later That Night on Newgate Street*

Act 2, Scene 3 | *The Following Day in Court*

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CAST



HUNTER BARTHOLOMEW (*Plainclothes Detective/Warder*)

Hunter is ecstatic to be joining this wonderful group of people here at ICTRep. He would like to thank God for consistently providing for him, his wife for being awesome, and Julie for asking him to join this production. This is Hunter's first time at ICTRep, but you may have seen him in shows at Newman University, Guild Hall Players, Kansas Lion Productions, or Roxy's Downtown.



MATTHEW GWINNER (*Sir Wilfrid Roberts, Q.C.*)

Matthew Gwinner is an ICTRep regular, as this show marks the sixth show he's been able to be a part of here. So, if you were able to catch *Sleuth*, *The Old Man and the Old Moon*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, or *Travesties*, then you might recognize his face. Perhaps you're thinking, "wait, that's only 5 shows," but you'd be mistaken, as Matthew was also part of the infamous stage crew during *Ms. Holmes and Ms. Watson!* Matthew loves working with ICTRep and hopes to sway the jury in this gripping court drama!



MICHELE JANSSENS (*Mrs. Helena Myers, Q.C.*)

Michele is grateful to share this evening with you! She is a 24-year veteran of the Wichita theater scene. Some favorite roles locally have included Ann Landers in *The Lady With All the Answers*, Bella in *Lost In Yonkers*, Rosemary in *Picnic*, Bella Manningham in *Angel Street*, Linda Loman in *Death of a Salesman*, Agnes in *The Fourposter*, and Amanda Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie*. Michele was most recently seen at Guild Hall as Beverly in *The Shadow Box* and was last seen at ICTRep as Berthe in *Boeing Boeing*.



CHRIS LOUCKS (*Inspector Hearne*)

Chris Loucks is thrilled to make his debut with ICTRep! He has performed with several local companies and is grateful for his place in the vibrant theatre community. Most recently, Chris portrayed Javert in *Les Misérables* with Stage Lights and appeared in *9 to 5* with MTWichita. Outside the stage, you can catch him swing dancing or tending to his bees. To God be the Glory



VONDA NEWBY-SCHUSTER (*Carter/Janet McKenzie*)

Vonda is no stranger to Christie, having directed 5 different productions, and acted in such chestnuts as *The Mousetrap*, *A Murder is Announced*, *Ten Little Indians*, *The Unexpected Guest*, and *The Hollow*. She is thrilled to be making her ICTRep debut, in this historic location, with this wonderful play. Recently seen as Yente in *Fiddler on the Roof* (Wichita Community Theatre) and next up will be *Path of Miracles* (Roxy's Downtown) and *Cover of Life* (Guild Hall Players). She thanks Julie and Paula for this great opportunity, the fabulous cast and crew for their beautiful work, her talented husband Dan, for his love and support, and YOU, for your support of live theatre in Wichita.



CHELSIE PENNER (*Greta*)

Chelsie is excited to be expanding her horizons in the Wichita theatre scene with ICTRep! Chelsie attended Butler CC, where she won the Best Actress Spelvin Award consecutively for her work in *The Ballad of Kate the Shrew*, and *Astronaut*. Most recently, she was seen in *Picnic* at Kechi Playhouse.



LYDIA PIRILLI (*Miss Clegg/The Other Woman*)

Lydia Pirilli is grateful to appear in her second production with ICTRep after her performance as Gloria in 2023's *Boeing Boeing*. Other recent credits include Ruth in *Blithe Spirit* and workshopping Irene Molloy in *Hello, Dolly* (Guild Hall Players), Jo in *Georgia McBride* (Roxy's Downtown), and Shelby in *Steel Magnolias* (Wichita Community Theatre). Lydia is a speech-language pathologist specializing in voice rehabilitation. Many thanks to Julie, Stan, Paula, Sydney, the cast and crew, JLG, and YOU for supporting local theater!



JENEÉ SAFFOLD (*Clerk of the Court*)

Jeneé is an attorney by day and lover of all things theater by night. You may have seen her in melodrama productions with Old Cowtown Museum's Empire House Players or as Professor Phifer in *Cleaning Up* at Kechi Playhouse. Most recently, she was Shera in the original stage play *Alibi* with Black Ink Theater Company. She is so grateful to be part of Wichita's vibrant theatre scene and hopes you enjoy the show.



AMY SHELDON LOUCKS (*Romaine Vole*)

Over the past few months, Amy has enjoyed learning German to prep for the role of Romaine and would like to thank the ICTRep team for this adventure! Her favorite recent theatrical roles include the Old Woman and the Captain (*The Old Man and the Old Moon* at ICTRep), Masha (*Three Sisters* at Guild Hall Players), and roles at Wichita Community Theatre. Amy loves serving as the Theatre Arts Director at Trinity Academy, co-directing the choral ensemble Philoxenia, and performing with her husband Chris! Soli Deo Gloria



JORDAN SICKMAN (*Mr. Justice Wainwright*)

Making his ICTRep debut, Jordan - an attorney inspired by *Rumpole of the Bailey* - can't wait to play an English judge. (Thank you, Julie!) Jordan has also appeared with Opera KS, Wichita Community Theatre, and the Forum Theatre. Love to Joanna, who in 2022 said, "Go audition and see what happens." Love to Leah and Noah for constant inspiration. And thank you, the audience, for supporting live theater in the ICT.



ICTRep: Dramatically Good!



HAGAN SIMMONS (*Leonard Vole*)

Hagan Simmons is an actor based in Wichita Kansas and graduated from Wichita State University with a BFA in Theatre Performance. He is so honored to be taking part in his debut performance with ICT Rep in this amazing production. He hopes you enjoy the show and if you wish to know more about him or see what's new with him you can follow him on instagram @simmonshagan.



EDDIE SPURLOCK (*John Mayhew/Dr. Wyatt*)

Eddie is excited to be performing in Witness for the Prosecution, marking his third stage production. He made his debut as a Shriner in *Light Up the Sky* and later took on the role of Leroy in *Bad Seed*. He also served as an assistant director for *Things My Mother Taught Me* at Kechi Playhouse. Eddie is grateful for the opportunity to continue growing as an actor and thanks the cast, crew, and audience for their support!

ARTISTIC TEAM



AGATHA CHRISTIE

Born in Torquay, England in 1890, Agatha Christie is the best-selling novelist of all time. With over one billion books sold in English and another billion in over 100 languages, she is outsold only by the Bible and Shakespeare. She wrote 80 crime novels and collections of short stories, over 25 plays (including *The Mousetrap*, the world's longest running play), and six novels under the pseudonym Mary Westmacott. Her first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, introduced the world to the Belgian detective Hercule Poirot, followed a decade later by the shrewd and often-underestimated Miss Marple.



PAULA MAKAR (*Director*)

Paula Makar is incredibly excited to make her directing debut at ICTRep! An associate member of SDC and member of Actor's Equity, Paula earned her MFA in Theatre from Oklahoma State University where she also directed *These Shining Lives*. Paula Received her BFA in Theatre Performance from Wichita State, where she later served as an Adjunct Lecturer and directed a contemporary production of *Love's Labors Lost*. Paula was also an Associate Professor of Theatre at Neosho County Community College where she directed *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, Lauren Gunderson's *Silent Sky*, *The Odd Couple (Female Version)*, and Qui Nguyen's *She Kills Monsters*. A native of Buffalo, New York, Paula now calls Wichita home.



SYDNEY ALDER (*Assistant & Intimacy Director, Stage Manager*)

Sydney Alder is again extremely honored to be working with ICTRep! She was last seen working on touring shows under IATSE 190, on stage for *War Horse in Concert* with ICTRep and the Wichita Symphony Orchestra, Intimacy Director for ICTRep's *Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson-Apt. 2B*, and Intimacy Director for Kechi Playhouse's *Things My Mother Taught Me*. Sydney is grateful for every experience and cannot wait for what's next! *thumbs up and smile*



JULIE LONGHOFER (*Costume & Scenic Designer*)

Dr. Longhofer recently served as Director and Narrator of *War Horse in Concert*, a co-production with the Wichita Symphony Orchestra, and was seen earlier this year as the mischievous Elvira in Guild Hall Players' *Blithe Spirit*. She looks forward to co-designing Wichita Community Theater's *Lend Me a Soprano* with husband and partner-in-all-things, Stan, as well as producing tonight's show. Grateful to work in the Wichita arts community!



STAN LONGHOFER (*Technical Director; Scenic & Lighting Design*)

By day, Stan is a professor of real estate and finance at Wichita State University and director of the WSU Center for Real Estate. On weekends and evenings, he has variously served as technical director, lighting designer, scenic director, psychotherapist and cheerleader on dozens of Julie's productions over the past 25 years.



KIRK LONGHOFER (*Sound Design*)

Kirk Longhofer is a sound designer, editor, producer, and live sound engineer. His theatrical designs are heard regularly in educational, community, and professional theaters across the country. Recent theatrical work includes the world premiere of *Tree of Life* and *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*, (White Theatre at the J, Overland Park), *Travesties*, *Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson, Apt. 2B* and *Sleuth* (ICTRep), *Blithe Spirit* (Guild Hall Players), and *Proof* (Olathe Civic Theatre Association).



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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Having seen ICTRep's productions *Travesties* and *War Horse in Concert* with the Wichita Symphony, I was humbled and honored when Dr. Julie Longhofer asked me to direct *Witness for the Prosecution*. Through research and deep discussion, we were able to explore many issues that crop up in a post-WW2 society. I was surprised to learn that Hampstead, where the residence of the murdered Emily French was located, was some of the most expensive real estate in the world, had more millionaires in residence than any other area of the UK, and was home to many storied intellectual, liberal, artistic, political, and literary individuals. After 1917 and into the 1930s, Hampstead was a base for *avant garde* writers and artists, as well as emigrés and exiles from the Russian Revolution. People like Emily French were called Champagne Socialists - people whose wealthy lifestyles were in direct conflict with their beliefs - having a left-wing political view while leading a lavish lifestyle (See Oscar Wilde's essay 'The Soul of Man under Socialism.')

Did this woman's kindness to Leonard Vole become her undoing? Imagine Vole watching Emily from afar, wondering what her money might do for him. But is there justice for the poor when they have to steal to eat? Is there justice for the political refugee Romaine? For the disregarded Janet MacKenzie? Or for Miss Myers, who KNEW her case was airtight. For me, this play is not only a twisted murder mystery - it is a disruptive 'social Zen koan' that keeps me up at night.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with this first-rate, hardworking cast and the Longhofers, who are not only seeking excellence in their craft, but are looking to enrich the Wichita Theatre Community with thoughtful material that enlightens and entertains.

ICTRep 2025-2026 Season

A Jukebox for the Algonquin by Paul Stroili | August 2025

Amadeus by Peter Shaffer | October 2025

The Past, A Present Yet to Come

A Christmas Carol prequel by Matt Schatz | November 2025

Silent Sky by Lauren Gunderson | January 2026

Sweat by Lynn Nottage | March 2026

SPECIAL THANKS TO

All of the Good Folks with Sedgwick County and the 18th Judicial District Court who have made it possible for us to perform in this iconic location. Most especially, Joni Wilson, Chief Darrell Haynes, Andrew Dilts, Kendal Ewing, Clark Wiemeyer, and Philip Davolt.

Matthew Gwinner, Jill Harper, Nina Longhofer, Chelsie Penner, Trinity Academy, and Wichita Community Theatre.

Todd Woodburn and Coldwell Banker Plaza Real Estate for providing rehearsal space for this production.



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Anonymous



A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

"Everyone is a potential murderer - in everyone there arises from time to time the wish to kill - though not the will to kill."

The wisdom of Agatha Christie (Dame Agatha, as I call her) is that the psychology of murder is also the psychology of all human beings. We love, we long to be loved, our love can turn to hate, and fear of losing that love can breed terror and despair. We love thrillers at ICTRep for their ability to combine the best of psychological depth in characterization and razor-sharp plot structures.

There are many variations on *Witness*, beginning with a clever short story called "Traitor Hands" which Christie wrote in 1927 and published in *Flynn's* magazine. When she enlarged the original concept in 1953 and adapted it substantially for the stage, Christie already had a very successful production in the West End (*The Mousetrap*, 1952). According to her grandson Mathew Prichard, Dame Agatha was fascinated by the challenge of "deceiving hundreds of people in a theater, so they don't know who's done it until the very end." The successful stage production was followed by an acclaimed 1957 film version directed by Billy Wilder, with Charles Laughton as Sir Wilfrid, Marlene Dietrich as 'Christine' Vole, and Tyrone Power (in his final film) as Leonard Vole.

Stan and I saw *Witness for the Prosecution* in 2018 at London County Hall (where it is still running). We were captivated as the drama unfolded in a real courtroom, and we turned to each other at intermission and said, "We could produce this kind of thing in Wichita." And now we have and are so excited to share it with you.

As is often the case with Agatha Christie, tonight's plot twists should surprise and thrill - we thank you in advance for preserving this experience by NOT giving away Who Done It! 🤫



ICTRep (Wichita Repertory Theater) is a semi-professional company that produces comedies, dramas, and thrillers. Our productions provide challenging roles and design opportunities for young actors and creatives to hone their crafts. In addition, we bring Wichita audiences together to enjoy high-quality, vibrant theatrical experiences that provide more than simply an evening's entertainment. We want our audiences to continue to reflect on and be moved by the plays we produce, long after the "curtain falls."

ICTRep: Dramatically Good!

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