

# PLAY READING COMMITTEE REPORT

## MARCH 16, 2026

Prepared by Deb Tom

### WINTER PRODUCTION: MYSTERY THRILLER:

**Plays read by Committee reviewed and put forward Clue as #1 choice and Murdered to Death as #2. This will be put to the membership at the April 20<sup>th</sup> 2026 GM.** DPS recommended that we wait until the touring company finishes up in Vancouver July 2026, but this would mean we will not be able to announce our season until possibly mid-August. It is my recommendation that we send the request for rights withing a few days after the meeting, and we will hear back within 6 weeks. If the answer is no we proceed with the #2 Choice.

**Murder Inn** (2025-26 PRC 2<sup>nd</sup> choice), by Howard Voland and Keith McGregor. Director Dwayne Campbell. DPS US. Cast (12) typically 6-7 Women & 4-5 men & 1 flex. Setting is a spooky Barnsley Inn built in 1800's. A murder mystery comedy set in a dilapidated New England inn supposedly haunted by a knife-throwing ghost, Marco. A "Ghosts and Ghouls" tour group, stranded by a storm, experiences a night of mayhem and murder as guests are picked off one by one, creating a "whodunit" scenario.

**Murdered to Death (2 Acts)**, by Peter Gordon. Director Dwayne Campbell DPS US. 5 M/5 F. Key roles include the bumbling Inspector Pratt, the inquisitive Joan Maple, and several eccentric suspects. Typical cast roles are listed below, varying by production. A hilarious 1930s-set comedy spoof of Agatha Christie whodunnits. An hilarious murder mystery farce at a country manor. As suspects and more victims pile up, the bumbling inspector tries to solve the case, often hindered by his own chaos. (Note this had a successful run in Chilliwack in November 2025)

**Murder by Bits and Bytes (2 Acts)**, original play presented by Authors, Desmond Price & Dawn Moore. They are willing to direct. At the play reading we all agreed it needed reworking. Committee felt the play wordy & contrived (All character's names start with D).

**Clue**, based on screenplay by Jonathan Lynn, written by Sandy Rustin. Director Dwayne Campbell DPS USA – rights and scripts plus tech package 5M / 5 F cast size possible 10 to 20. It takes place in several rooms. *Clue: On Stage* is a hilarious farce-meets-murder mystery based on the 1985 movie and board game. Six strangers are invited to a mansion, blackmailed by Mr. Boddy, and must find the killer when bodies start piling up, leading to a frantic, comedic race to identify the culprit, weapon, and room.

**Plays put forward by did not review:** **Dial M for Murder** – Director, Samantha Hussey (not available); **Spirit of Bay Manor** – no director/no script; **The Thin Man** by Lucia Frangione – No Director.

## **SPRING FESTIVAL ENTRY APRIL/MAY: DRAMA**

**Plays read by Committee reviewed three 2-Act Dramas – our #1 Choice is Time Piece and #2 Someday**

**Time Piece** by Kico Gonzalez-Risso (Vancouver) Note this was put on by Driftwood players and recommended by Peter Borgman. Director Dale Kelly. CAST 2M/2F, Setting: Family Home – Kitchen and Back Yard. Patrick and Karla seem to have a simple task - to help their parents Walter and Doris put their affairs in order before it's too late. The kids want to plan for the future, mom wants a smooth transition into old age, dad doesn't see what all the fuss is about. He especially does not want to sell the family home, which would go a long way to solving most issues. The often humorous exchanges between Walter and his family don't quite hide the fact that Walter is starting to lose his memory. Or is he? He's certainly a man full of surprises. The kids try everything to convince their parents to deal with their estate planning. Meanwhile, the many clocks on the kitchen wall keep ticking on.

**Someday** by Drew Hayden Taylor (CDN-1st Nation, Director Samantha Hussey  
2 Act - Indigenous Cast Required 1 M/3 F

The setting for the play is a fictional Ojibway community, but could be any reserve in Canada, where thousands of Native children were removed from their families in what is known as the "scoop-up" of the 1950s and 1960s. Anne Wabung's daughter was taken away by children's aid workers when the girl was only a toddler. It is Christmastime 35 years later, and Anne's yearning to see her now-grown daughter is stronger than ever and with her lottery winnings she and her other daughter and friend have the money to fund the search. When the family is finally reunited, however, the dreams of neither woman are fulfilled.

**Courting Johanna** by Marcia Johnson Cdn-African decedent. Director Laura De Cicco.

2 Act. Cast 2 M/3 F. Two teenage girls in 1950s rural Ontario discover a personal letter that a lonely housekeeper has written to a man she barely knows. The girls decide to play a trick on her by forging his love letters to her with unexpected consequences

## **SUMMER CO-PRO: JULY 2027 – CAPRICORN THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS**

### **LAUREN TROTZUK**

We are meeting with Lauren on March 28<sup>th</sup> at which time she will be presenting **Persephone** (being workshopped this year in the Valley & According to Aurelie (May 2025 production at Langley Little Theatre receiving a 2026 Ovation! Award for Lauren Trotzuk's for Outstanding New Musical).

Note: When the request for submissions went out, it did not state Vagabond Players does not do 1 Acts or 2-hander plays, and subsequently quite a few 1 Act & 2-handers Dramas were submitted. We read a few with the thought of doing a Summer of 1 Acts instead of a Co-Pro but decided not to move forward with our recommendation as there was no common thread and with double the costs for rights, directors etc plus we were already in contact with Lauren with regards to a Co-pro.

**One Act Plays read by Committee for possible summer one acts:**

**This is How We Got Here**, by Keith Barker - CDN Metis, Director Connor Hogg, **Saltwater Moon**, by David French CDN, Director Samantha Hussey and **Half Life**, by John Mighton CDN, Director Laura Di Cicco.

**Plays put forward but were not reviewed:** **Morning Dove** No Script/No Director; **Stones in His Pocket**, Director Wayne Nolan & Script (Only 2 actors), **A Beautiful View**, Daniel MacIvor, Director Samantha Hussey (only 1 Act/2Actors).