

Dial **M** For Murder

By Frederick Knott
Directed by Tim Ocel

September 5 – October 1

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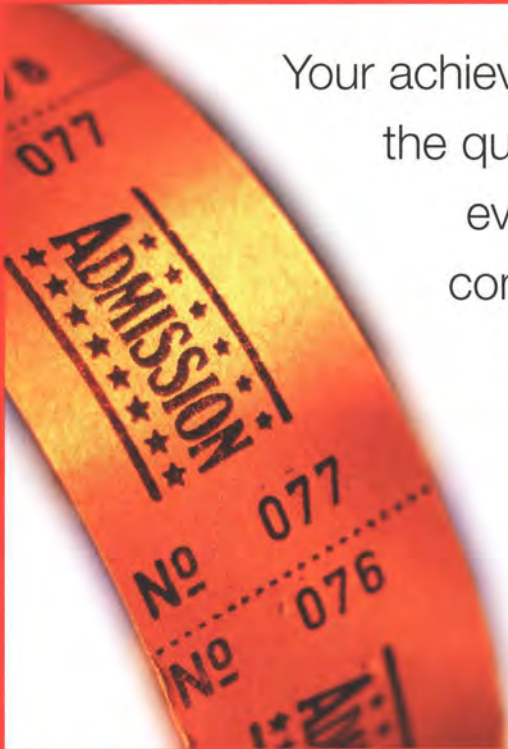
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presents

DIAL M FOR MURDER

by **FREDERICK KNOTT**

Directed by **TIM OCEL**

Scenic Design
ERHARD ROM

Costume Design
B. MODERN

Lighting Design
MARCUS DOSHI

Sound Design
DAN ROACH

Composer
GREGG COFFIN

Assistant Director
**MELISSA RAIN
ANDERSON**

Dramaturg
MARGE BETLEY

Stage Manager
KIRSTEN BRANNEN*

Assistant Stage Managers
ALEXANDRA M. BACKUS*
FRANK CAVALLO*

Apprentice Stage Manager
CHERYL CARROLL

Production Manager
JOEL MARKUS

Casting
**ELISSA MYERS &
PAUL FOUQUET, CSA**

Dial M For Murder is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

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THE CAST

(in order of appearance)

Margot Wendice	Rachel Fowler*
Max Halliday	Bill Doyle*
Tony Wendice	Ted Deasy*
Captain Lesgate	Jim Wisniewski*
Inspector Hubbard	Paul Hebron*
Thompson	Rick Staropoli
Williams	Ken Bordner

There will be one 20-minute intermission.



ssdc



*Members of Actors' Equity Association,

the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The Director is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc.,
an independent national labor union.

The Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Sound Designers in LORT Theatres are represented
by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.

Please note that the taking of photographs or use of recording devices during the performance is not permitted. Cell phones and all other electronic devices are strictly prohibited in the theatre.

This theatre operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), a consortium of regional theatres throughout the nation, and Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States, and the Society of Stage Directors & Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.

Geva Theatre Center is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG),
the national service organization for non-profit, professional theatres.

About The Playwright

Though not a prolific playwright, Frederick Knott wrote two enormously successful stage thrillers, *Dial M for Murder* and *Wait Until Dark*. Both had long runs on Broadway and in the West End, and both were later made into films.

The son of missionaries, Knott was born in Hankow, China, in 1916. He went to



Cambridge in 1934 and was an exceptionally fine tennis player—a profession he gave the central character in *Dial M for Murder*. It was only the advent of the Second World War that prevented his competing

at Wimbledon. He graduated in 1938, then served during the war, ending his service with the rank of major.

In 1948 Knott's parents bought a small holding in West Sussex, and it was in a chalet in the property's garden that he wrote *Dial M for Murder*. It took him 18 months, and there were times when the creative effort was such that he remained in his dressing gown and his mother would leave meals for him at the door.

The struggle to write the play was followed by an even greater one to get it produced. Knott sent it to seven different theatre managements, all of whom rejected it. Knott was thinking of tearing the script up when the BBC accepted it.

The BBC television transmission, early in 1952, was a great success. Shortly thereafter a North Country businessman decided to take a chance on staging the play at a moderate cost. It opened at the Westminster Theatre in June 1952 after only three weeks' rehearsal with many of the television cast members.

During that time the actor Maurice Evans read the play and became excited at the thought of presenting it in New York with himself in the lead . . . and he acquired the right to present the play in America.

The play's Broadway opening in October 1952 was as big a success as the London one. It ran for 16 months and then toured. During the next five years the play was seen in 30 countries. Knott wrote the screenplay of Hitchcock's film, released in 1954.

Knott had a moderate success with *Write Me a Murder* (1961), which ran for six months on Broadway. His second smash-hit came in 1966 with the tense thriller *Wait Until Dark*, which starred Lee Remick as the blind heroine terrorised by a group of murderous crooks until she smashes all the light-bulbs in her apartment and takes on their leader in pitch darkness.

Though he had sketched out a couple of other plays in his head, Knott never put them on paper. He made enough from his three plays to live comfortably and, said his wife [actress Ann Hillary], "I don't think the drive was there any more. He was perfectly happy the way things were."

Frederick Knott died December 17, 2002.

— excerpted from an article
in *London's The Independent*



*The promotional lobby card for
the American film release.*

The Artistic Company

KEN BORDNER (*Williams*) This is Mr. Bordner's first role at Geva. In Rochester he has played



numerous small roles for the Shakespeare Company of Greater Rochester, which has done six performances at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in the 19th Ward. He has also been seen in *The Chosen*

(David Malter), *Deathtrap* (Sydney Brühl) and *Brooklyn Boy* (Manny Weiss) at The Jewish Community Center; *The Trials of Ezra Pound* (Ezra Pound) at Shipping Dock; and *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (Michael), *Waiting For Godot* (Pozzo) and *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Father Jack) for the Rochester Irish Players. Prior to attending seminary from 1993-96 and becoming an Episcopal priest in 1997, Mr. Bordner was professor of theatre in colleges in Massachusetts, Minnesota, California and Colorado. He and his wife have lived in Rochester for the past seven years. "Silly me. I thought I was leaving the theatre when I entered the priesthood."

TED DEASY (*Tony Wendice*) is thrilled to be back at Geva, where he last joined the cast of *A*



Christmas Carol (Ghost of Christmas Present). Off-Off Broadway credits include *A Phoenix Too Frequent* and *The 7th of October*. Other regional theatre credits include *Accomplice* at Two

Rivers Theatre Company; *The Comedy of Errors* at Yale Rep; *Private Lives* at Indiana Rep and Syracuse Stage; *All's Well That Ends Well* and *The Foreigner* at Utah Shakespearean Festival; *Stones in His Pockets* at New American Theater; *Cyrano*, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *Sueño*, *Mary Stuart*, *Richard III*, *The Shaughraun* and *Anna*

Karenina at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; *Diva*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Macbeth* at Delaware Theatre Company; *The Heiress* at TheatreVirginia; and *Cymbeline*, *As You Like It*, *Rough Crossing*, *Henry IV Part 1*, *The Winter's Tale* and *Twelfth Night*, among others, in four seasons with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Television and film credits include "All My Children," "Guiding Light," "Silk Stalkings," *Prophet of Evil* and *Secret Bodyguard*.

BILL DOYLE (*Max Halliday*) is a native of Central NY and is delighted to be making his



Geva debut. Off-Broadway: *Beau Jest* at Lamb's Theatre, *Henry V* at New York Shakespeare Festival and the premiere of Nicki Silver's *The Nasty Bits*. Regional: Title role in *Mister Roberts* at St.

Louis Rep. and Cincinnati Playhouse, *Taking Sides* at Long Beach Playhouse, *Buried Treasure* at George Street Playhouse, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Of Mice and Men* at Levin Theater, *Our Country's Good*, *The Diviners*, *Dracula* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Film: Just finished filming *Delta Farce* and *Kings of South Beach* for A&E. Other recent Indies include *The Far Side of Jericho* (with Patrick Bergin), *George Bush Goes to Heaven*, *Brotherhood of Blood* and *The Thirst*. Television: "Criminal Minds," "CSI: Miami," "The Practice," "Six Feet Under," "Arli\$\$," "Passions," "All My Children," "One Life To Live" and *The Heidi Leiter Story* (with Claire Danes) for HBO.

RACHEL FOWLER (*Margot Wendice*) New York: *Treason* at Perry Street, *The Daughter-In-Law* at Mint Theater, *The Triangle Factory Fire Project* at TACT, *The Pagans* at Abingdon and *Cloud 9* at Bank Street Theatre. Regional: *All My Sons* (Ovation Award Best Supporting Actress) and *Measure for*



Measure at Denver Center, *Humble Boy* at St Louis Rep, *Fiction* at Old Globe, *Amadeus* at Pioneer, *Hobson's Choice* at PlayMakers Rep (Triangle Award, Best Actress in a Comedy), *Proof* and *King O'The Moon* at Cincinnati Playhouse, *La Bête* at Actors Theatre of Louisville, *Huis Clos* and *Antigone* (in French) at Théâtre du Rêve, and *The Philadelphia Story* at Actors' Express. Ms. Fowler is a Northwestern graduate and was an apprentice at Actors Theatre of Louisville. She is an Artistic Associate of the Mile Square Theatre and a company member of both the Urban Rock Project and TACT.

PAUL HEBRON (*Inspector Hubbard*) Mr. Hebron is delighted to be making his debut



here at Geva! His Broadway credits include the revival of *Born Yesterday* with Madeline Kahn and Ed Asner and *Uncle Vanya* with Tom Courteney and James Fox. He has performed extensively Off Broadway, in national tours and at regional theatres across the country, including the Old Globe in San Diego, the Cleveland Playhouse and the Denver Center Theatre Company. For the past 10 seasons he was a member of the resident acting company at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, where favorite roles included Gloucester in *King Lear*, Pandarus in *Troilus and Cressida* and Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*. Mr. Hebron is married to actress Sonja Lanzener:

RICK STAROPOLI (*Thompson*) is proud to be back at Geva, where he was last seen in *John Bull's Other Island*. Mr. Staropoli was recently seen in the Penfield Players' production of *Gaspang* (Phillip) and in *King Lear* (Edgar) with the Rochester Shakespeare Players. Mr. Staropoli owes a debt (of gratitude and otherwise) to the partners at his law firm, whose accommodation of his



avocation has risen to the level of true support and encouragement.

JIM WISNIEWSKI (*Captain Lesgate*) In New York, Mr. Wisniewski has worked with the



Adobe Theater, Soho Rep, the Working Theater, American Globe Theatre, Theatre Trouve and Kaleidoscope Theatre. His regional credits include *Philadelphia*, *Here I Come!*, *Proof*,

Three Days of Rain, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Inherit The Wind* at the BoarsHead Theater; *Morning's at Seven* at Cape Fear; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Much Ado About Nothing* at American Stage; *A Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Biloxi Blues* and *Beast* at New Tampa Players; and *Line* at Circle Theatre. Film and television credits include "The Sopranos," "Law & Order: Criminal Intent" (two times), "The Late Show with David Letterman," "All My Children" and *Mattie Fresno* and *The Holoflux Universe*. Mr. Wisniewski would like to thank Ericka for her love and support.

TIM OCEL (*Director*) Mr. Ocel's past work at Geva includes *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Biloxi Blues*, *Broadway Bound*, *Ghosts* and *Twelve Angry Men*. Productions elsewhere include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *As You Like It*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Taming of the Shrew* at Shakespeare Santa Cruz; *King Lear*, *Measure for Measure* and *Richard II* at Georgia Shakespeare Festival; *The Good Person of Setzuan*, *Electra/Agamemnon* and Shaw's *Back to Methuselah* at Theatre Emory; *The Grapes of Wrath*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Lonely Planet*, *The Mousetrap*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *A View From the Bridge*, *Fifth of July* and *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* at Sacramento Theatre Company; *Art* and *I Do! I Do!* at Indiana Rep; *Billy Budd*, Verdi's *Macbeth*, *Salome*, *The Elixir of Love* and *Un Ballo in Maschera* at The Lyric Opera of Kansas City; and *Carmen* and *La Boheme* at Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Mr. Ocel has just finished his second year as Associate

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