

WHILE
THE LIGHTS
WERE OUT

EDUCATION PACKET

DEVELOPED BY LUIS GALVEZ

ABOUT OUR PLAY

While the Lights Were Out is a delightful evening of farcical mayhem and murder mystery written by Jack Sharkey.

The play is set at the Wickenham Estate in Hamilton, Bermuda, in 1967.

- Play Synopsis:

“As tensions rise at Lord Clive and Lady Monica Wickenham’s dinner party, so does the growing storm outside until suddenly—the lights go out! Screams! An agonized voice! A pistol shot! The lights come up! The detective examines the body and the question on everyone’s mind follows: What exactly happened while the lights were out, and who is next? This hilarious yet suspenseful tale will keep you guessing as the plot furiously twists and turns at the Wickenham estate.”

CONTENT WARNING:

This play includes the depicted use of alcohol and smoking, gunshots, and mild violence.

BERMUDA

Bermuda is a self-governing British territory in the Atlantic Ocean, about 600 miles East of North Carolina. It is an archipelago (a group of islands) with an area of 20 square miles, which is five times smaller than Reno alone!

The Bermuda Triangle is a region in the Atlantic ocean where more than fifty ships and aircrafts have disappeared. The three points of the triangle are Bermuda, Miami, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.



Because Bermuda does not have any accessible freshwater rivers or lakes, the rooftops of almost every building are designed to channel rain into underground tanks to collect rainwater. Fish in the tank filter the water for uses such as showering, flushing toilets, and washing clothes.

FARCE AND MURDER MYSTERY

A **farce** is a comic dramatic piece that uses highly improbable situations, stereotyped characters, extravagant exaggeration, and often, violent horseplay. Examples of farces include:



NOISES OFF



MINIONS



HOME ALONE

A **murder mystery** is a narrative that centers on a criminal act (or acts) and especially on the investigation of a crime, often a murder. This genre is also known as crime fiction or detective fiction. Examples of murder mysteries include:



**SHERLOCK
HOLMES**



KNIVES OUT



**DEATH ON
THE NILE**

FARCE AND MURDER MYSTERY

While the Lights Were Out is both a farce and a murder mystery. Take a look at the elements below, and see which ones you notice while watching the play.

FARCE

- Improbable Events
- Slapstick Comedy
- Comedic Emphasis

MURDER MYSTERY

- Seemingly Impossible Events
- Suspense & Thriller
- Plot & Character Emphasis

BOTH

- Violence
- Deception
- Entrapment
- Psychological Appeal
- Exaggerated Characters
- Use of Tropes

FAMILIAR FACES

If you're a big fan of on-stage murder mysteries in town, you may recognize some of the talent in our show! Do any of these actors seem familiar to you?



Ryan Costello (Tom Groggins)
*Watson in **Baskerville***

Michael Davanzo (Roderick Remley)
*Wadsworth in **Clue: On Stage***



Bryce Keil (Pierre Pourri)
*Ratchett in **Murder on the Orient Express***

Ian Sorenson (Benjamin Braddock)
*Actor 2 in **Baskerville***



Darcy Lenardson (Jasmine Perdoo)
*Mrs. Peacock in **Clue: On Stage***

DURING THE SHOW

- There is no photography or recording of any kind allowed during the performance. Silence your phone and refrain from texting, as it can be distracting to those around you or on stage.
- No outside food or drink is allowed in the theater. However, any purchases made at our concession stand can be enjoyed in the theater during the show. Remain seated throughout the duration of the play.
- There will be a 15-minute intermission between acts, which would be a great time to check your phone, go to the bathroom, grab some snacks, or talk about the play.

OTHER REMINDERS

- **Timeliness is KEY**

- It is important to arrive before the show's start time (7:30 pm for preview and evening shows, 2:00 pm for Sunday matinees). Consider arriving earlier to beat the lines and snag good parking. Doors open thirty minutes before curtain.

- **Parking**

- Do not park between our building and the red brick building on the east side of Reno Little Theater. (You will be towed)
- Street parking is available but limited.
- Additional parking can be found in front of Uncle Freddie's or Caliber Salon when they are not open for business.

BACKSTAGE TOURS

- Sign up for a backstage tour following Sunday matinee performances. (1/21 & 2/4)
- These tours will be led by the cast and crew of the show and will offer a behind-the-scenes look at how we make this show happen.
- Tours are \$5/person, and a tour ticket does not give you access to the show. Show tickets must be purchased separately if you want to see the show.

ABOUT OUR PRODUCTION

- While the Lights Were Out is being produced by Reno Little Theater at **147 E. Pueblo St.**
- Directed by Libby Bakke, rehearsals for the show began in late October. The show runs from January 19 to February 11, with a preview on Wednesday, January 17, and a post-show talkback with the audience on Sunday, January 28. The play is the third of five in RLT's 89th Season.
- For more information about the production and Reno Little Theater, visit **renolittletheater.org**

