



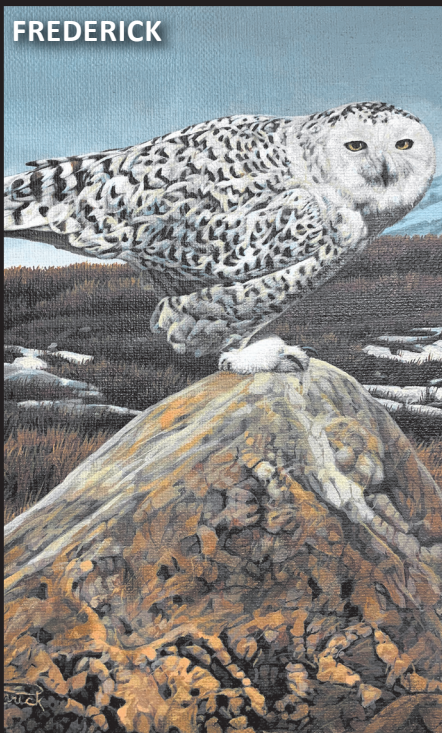
Courtesy CTC / Submitted photo

Trouble is afoot when the Orient Express becomes mired in snow and a passenger is murdered during the trans-European journey.

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humorous, per se, but you may after you learn it was award-winning contemporary comic playwright Ken Ludwig who adapted the 1934 novel to the stage in 2017 at the request of the Agatha Christie Estate. (Ludwig is a frequent go-to for CTC, which will produce his play "Shakespeare in Hollywood" beginning March 18.)

Fortunately, world-famous detective Hercule Poirot, played by Alex Daly (sporting quite the era-appropriate mustache), just happens to be among the passengers, thanks to his friend, Constantine Bouc (Dan Witty), who is the train's captain and manages to find a compartment on the fully booked train, which includes Princess Dragomiroff (Nancy Scher) and Countess Andrenyi (Kisky Holwerda), along with less regal folks such as Greta Ohlsson (Emily Cady), Hector McQueen (Josh Curtis) and Mary Debenham (Natalie Curtis).

Having a sleuth aboard is rather convenient when one of the passengers is found dead in his compartment: American Samuel Ratchett (Zachary Ellis), who, prior to shedding his mortal coil and knowing someone was after him, had actually tried to hire Poirot. It may be too late to save Ratchett, but it's not too late to find and reveal the culprit, and audiences are in for a fun ride to the destination. And do take notice of the creatively built and arranged set by master

If You Go

What: Agatha Christie's "Murder on the Orient Express"

When: Opens 7:30 p.m. Friday, with additional performances at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday, through Jan. 30

Where: Cascades Theatre, 148 NW Greenwood Ave.

Cost: \$27, \$25 seniors and students

Contact: cascadestheatrical.org/murder-on-the-orient-express

carpenter Garry Loddo, which manages to fit multiple compartments, train station and more onto the stage with the help of a scrim and projections.

During a rehearsal last Friday, cast members wore masks, one sitting and reading lines masked from the back row of the theater, well away from other cast members as she awaited the results of a COVID-19 test. Director Flanagan told GO! that they were taking all conceivable precautions in rehearsals and would continue wearing masks until dress rehearsal, though not during public performances.

"I can't think of any other way to be safer," Flanagan said. "If one person gets it, we could close."

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