

CHILLING CLASSIC

MISERY

BY **WILLIAM GOLDMAN**
BASED ON THE NOVEL BY **STEPHEN KING**

OCT 15 THRU NOV 2, 2025



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Dear Friends,

Welcome to our 47th Season! Whether you are a long-time subscriber, first-time attendee, or somewhere in between, we are glad you are here. Our mission is to build community through theatre. We do that by sharing stories on stage that illuminate big questions, bold ideas, and extraordinary artists. The sharing is not complete without you. Thank you for joining us for what promises to be a thrilling season.

We start this season in much beloved storytelling terrain; a chilling adaptation of Stephen King's *Misery*. Known as the "King of Horror", King uses the fundamental tools of the genre to grasp the human psyche of the audience. There is nothing supernatural in this work. No monsters, no ghosts. Instead, *Misery* probes the darkest corners of human existence – obsession, captivity, physical, and psychological torture. These elements deliver profound impact – the story isn't scaring simply just to scare. Inside we find a bigger contemplation from the writer. When the book was released in 1987, the *New York Times* review stated, "...unlike much of Mr. King's fiction, this novel is more than just a splendid exercise in horror. Its subject is not merely torture, but the torture of being a writer." The allure of *Misery* led to the 1991 film starring Kathy Bates as Annie Wilkes, a performance that earned her an Oscar. William Goldman, a veteran of film and theatre adaptations, has skillfully crafted a masterful version for the stage.

In this season we are focused on honoring the past and presaging the future, by highlighting artist's work who have fueled MRT and new voices shining alongside them. *Misery* affords us an opportunity to work with MRT regular Karen MacDonald who has appeared in over a dozen productions on the Nancy L. Donahue stage. Tom Coiner who has been seen in every recent iteration of MRT's *A Christmas Carol* and originated the role of Jack in MRT's world premiere of *Gaslight*, goes toe to toe with MacDonald as the writer Paul Sheldon. A newcomer to MRT Chris Centinaro rounds out this gripping three-hander. The design team

includes MRT veterans Yao Chen (Costumes), Brian J. Lilienthal (Lighting), and David Remedios (Sound). We warmly welcome scenic designer Ryan Bates who teaches at Emerson College to the merry band. Backed by an equally stellar staff and crew, this alchemy of talent has prepared for you an engrossing night of theatre.

We hope you will join us for all this season's offerings. Our work is done in service of you – our dear audience.

We thank you for being here.

In Community,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Courtney Sale'.

Courtney Sale
Nancy L. Donahue Executive Artistic Director

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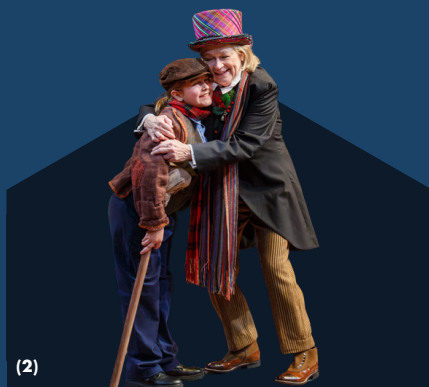




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THANK YOU FOR JOINING US LAST SEASON!

PHOTOS BY MEG MOORE/MEGPIX.COM: (1) Kathryn Van Meter in *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*. | (2) Karen MacDonald and a member of the youth cast in *A Christmas Carol* | (3) Peter Carranza and Katie Wiitala in *Elephant and Piggie's "We are in a Play!"* | (4) Jenece Upton in *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* | PHOTO BY MIKKI SCHAFFNER. | (5) John Patrick Hayden in *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*



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PHOTOS BY MEG MOORE/MEGPIX.COM: (1) (L-R) Doug Harvey as Hamlet, Geoffrey Barnes as Yorick, and Austin Tichenor as Ophelia in *The Comedy of Hamlet! (a prequel!)* | (2) Pisay Pao and Joe Ngo in *What You Are Now*.

COURTNEY SALE
NANCY L. DONAHUE
EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE

PRESENTS

MISERY

BY

WILLIAM GOLDMAN

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY

STEPHEN KING

SCENIC DESIGNER

RYAN BATES

COSTUME DESIGNER

YAO CHEN[^]

LIGHTING DESIGNER

BRIAN J. LILIENTHAL[^]

SOUND DESIGNER

DAVID REMEDIOS[^]

STAGE MANAGER

ELENA RING

FIGHT DIRECTOR

TED HEWLETT⁺

DIRECTOR

COURTNEY SALE⁺

OCTOBER 15 - NOVEMBER 2, 2025

*Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

[^]Member of United Scenic Artists

⁺Member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers

Original Broadway production produced by Warner Bros. Theatre Ventures in association with Castle Rock Entertainment, Liz Glotzer, Mark Kaufman, Martin Shafer, Raymond Wu

World premiere at Bucks County Playhouse, New Hope, PA

Jed Bernstein, Producing Director

CAST

Karen MacDonald* Annie Wilkes
Tom Coiner* Paul Sheldon
Christopher Centinaro* Buster

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION CREDITS

Emily Allinson Props Supervisor
Huntington Theatre Company Scenic Fabrication
Megan LaCroix Assistant Costume Designer
Naomi Jadotte Production Assistant



*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



⁺Member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, a national theatrical labor union.



[^]The Scenic, Costume, Lighting, and Sound Designers in this production are represented by United Scenic Artists (USA) Local USA-829, IATSE.



Merrimack Repertory Theatre is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre.



Merrimack Repertory Theatre operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), a consortium of regional theatres throughout the nation, and AEA (Actors' Equity Association), SDC (Stage Directors and Choreographers Society), and USA (United Scenic Artists).

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WHO'S WHO



KAREN MACDONALD

(Annie Wilkes)

She/Her. Karen is a Boston - based artist and has worked at the MRT many times, most

recently in *A Christmas Carol* (3 seasons as Scrooge) and *Gaslight*. Other recent work includes *Pru Payne* (Speakeasy Stage), *Nassim* (Huntington Theatre Company), *Wipeout* (Gloucester Stage), and *Rooted* (Lyric Stage). Regional work includes Greater Boston Stage Company, Trinity Rep, Gamm Theatre, Boston Theatre Company, Sleeping Weazel, Martha's Vineyard Playhouse, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, New Repertory Theatre, Arts Emerson, Boston Playwrights Theatre, Portland Stage, Hartford Stage, and Berkshire Theatre Festival. A Founding Company Member of the American Repertory Theatre, she appeared in 73 productions, including *Endgame*, *The Sea Gull*, *Mother Courage*, *No Exit*, *Highway Ulysses*, and *Othello*, performing in Cambridge and touring internationally. On Broadway, she understudied and performed the role of Amanda Winfield in John Tiffany's production of *The Glass Menagerie*. Nationally, she has worked extensively, from Philadelphia's Wilma Theatre to Berkeley Rep. She appeared with The BSO at Symphony Hall and Tanglewood, playing Titania in a concert version of Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and premiered *A Soldier's Carol*

with the Boston Pops. Her teaching credits include Harvard University for over two decades, teaching undergraduates and extension students, and Boston College, where she was the Monin Fellow 2010-2011. Karen is the recipient of several Eliot Norton and IRNE awards for her work, and she received both the Robert Brustein Award for Sustained Achievement in the Theatre and the Eliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence. She is married to sound designer David Remedios.



TOM COINER

(Paul Sheldon)

He/Him. Tom Coiner is thrilled to be returning for MRT's 47th season. Tom was born in Marlborough, went to

Kenyon College, and got his MFA from the National Theater Conservatory. Off-Broadway: *The Daughter-in-Law* (Mint Theater), *God Said This* (Primary Stages). MRT: *Gaslight*, *The 39 Steps*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Silent Sky*. Other Theatres: *The Winter's Tale*, *The 39 Steps* (Utah Shakespeare Festival), *The Invisible Hand* (Milwaukee Rep), *The Full Catastrophe*, *On Clover Road*, *Wrecked*, and *Support Group for Men* (Contemporary American Theater Festival), *God Said This* (Humana Festival), *Good Men Wanted* (New York Stage & Film), *Both Your Houses*, *Our Betters*, *The Little Foxes*, and *The Great Society* (Asolo Rep). TV: *Law & Order*:

WHO'S WHO

SVU, *Law & Order*, *The Good Fight*, *Boardwalk Empire*, *The Night Of*, *Person of Interest*, *It's Bruno!* GAMES: *Red Dead Redemption 2*.



CHRISTOPHER CENTINARO

(Buster) He/Him.

Chris is delighted to be making his MRT debut.

Other Credits include *A Christmas Carol* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival), *The Winter's Tale*, *Henry VIII*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Coriolanus*, & *Timon of Athens* (Utah Shakespeare Festival) and *Mojada*, *Oedipus El Rey* (Indianapolis Shakespeare Company).

COURTNEY SALE (Nancy L. Donahue Executive Artistic Director) She/Her. Courtney proudly serves as the MRT's Executive Artistic Director. She joined the company in March of 2020 and is honored to work for a remarkable organization with incredible people. At MRT she has directed *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*, *Gaslight*, *The 39 Steps*, *A Woman Of The World*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Playwrights commissioned under her tenure include Trista Baldwin, Vichet Chum, Kevin Kling, Melinda Lopez, Dael Orlandersmith, James Still, Klean Ung, and launched the Sokhary Chau Playwriting Fellowship. Under her leadership, MRT has increased service

to students, strengthened its partnership in community, and ensured artistic excellence. Courtney's directing has been seen across the country: *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Seattle Rep), *The Overview Effect*, *Support Group For Men*, *The Cake*, *Not Medea* (Contemporary American Theater Festival), *The Mountaintop*, *The Mousetrap*, *April 4 1968*, (Indiana Rep, also Associate Artistic Director 2013-2016), *Gaslight* (Cincinnati Shakes), *On Clover Road* (Phoenix Theatre), *Twelfth Night* (IndyShakes). She previously served as the Artistic Director at Seattle Children's Theatre (SCT), the nation's leading generator of new work for family audiences. She has developed new work with the Denver Center, New Harmony Project, Dorset Theatre Festival, Emerson Stage, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, and the Orchard Project. Other distinctions include Cornish College Distinguished Alumni Award, IBJ's 40 under 40 designation, and the 2017 keynote at the International Council of Fine Arts Deans. Courtney is a member of the National Theatre Conference. BFA, Cornish College of the Arts. MFA, The University of Texas at Austin.

RYAN BATES (Scenic Director)

He/Him. Regional Credits include: New Repertory Theatre (*We Will Not Be Silent*, *Ideation*, *The Testament of Mary*, *Brecht on Brecht*), Bridge Repertory Theatre (*Dark Room*, *Salome*), The

WHO'S WHO

Umbrella (*Hundred Days*), Off the Grid (*Blasted*), Gloucester Stage Company (*4000 Miles, Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*), Film Credits: Overdue Films (*Poor Glenna*). Ryan Bates holds an MFA from Boston University. Visit his website www.ryanbatesdesign.com

YAO CHEN (Costume Designer)

She/Her. **Merrimack Repertory**

Theatre: *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life, Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill, Until the Flood, Holly Fudge, Macbeth, Letters from Home.*

Regional: Seattle Children's Theatre (*Little Prince*), Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey (*Merry Wives of Windsor, Titus Andronicus, Mid Winter Nights Dream*), Berkshire Theatre Group (*The Music Man*) Trinity Repertory Company (*Radio Golf*), Indiana Repertory Theatre (*Paper Dream of Harry Chin, Diary of Ann Frank, The House that Jack Built, The Folks at Home, The Glass Menageries*), Contemporary American Theatre (*Babel, Ushuaia Blue*), Orlando Repertory Theatre (*Skipppy Jone, Diary of Worms, Nancy Drew and Her Biggest Case ever, Pete the Cat*), Orlando Shakespeare Theatre (*Antony and Cleopatra, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*), TheatreSquared (*Missed you like Hell*), Children's Theatre of Charlotte (*Elephant and Piggie: We are in a play*), First stage (*Emily Song and Queen of the Night*), Utah Opera and Musical Festival (*Cats*), Lyric Company of Boston, Boston

Playwright Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. **International:** Seven Ages, Ltd, Beijing China (*Mozart l'opera rock*) Espresso Theatre (*Amadeus*) in San Jose, Costa Rica. Education: UT Austin. USA829, www.yao-chen.com

BRIAN LILIENTHAL (Lighting

Designer) He/Him. Previous at MRT, 38 Productions including: *I and You, the realness: a break beat play, Silent Sky, 45 Plays....., A Christmas Carol* ('22). **Regional:** Over 300 productions including: 60 productions at Actors Theatre of Louisville (including over 25 world premieres), Alley Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Arizona Theatre Company, Capital Rep, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Cleveland Playhouse, GEVA Theatre Center, Gloucester Stage, Hartford Stage, The Huntington Theatre, The Kennedy Center, Milwaukee Rep, Pasadena Playhouse, Playmakers Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory, over 30 productions at Trinity Repertory Company, among others. He has won the Los Angeles Ovation Award for lighting design, as well as the 2016 Artistic Achievement Award from Merrimack Rep, and has been nominated multiple times for Boston's IRNE and Norton Awards. MFA: California Institute of the Arts. Mr. Lilienthal teaches lighting design at Tufts University. He is an in demand drummer in the Metro Boston area

WHO'S WHO

working with country, indie-folk, jump blues, and americana bands.

DAVID REMEDIOS (Sound Designer)

He/Him. **Merrimack Repertory**

Theatre: 24 productions including: *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life, Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill, The 39 Steps; The Rise and Fall of Holly Fudge; A Woman of the World; The Wickhams and Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley; The Haunted Life; Knyum; The Royale; Women in Jeopardy!; Year Zero; The Blonde, the Brunette, and the Vengeful Redhead. Recent: Your Name Means Dream* (Theater J); *A Christmas Carol and The Winter's Tale* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Co.); *Redeemed* (59E59); *Tornado Tastes Like Aluminum Sting* (Contemporary American Theater Festival); *The Hours Are Feminine* (INTAR). **Regional:** Northern Stage; Arizona Theatre Company; Everyman Theatre; Huntington Theatre; Portland Stage; City Theatre Company; Alley Theatre; Trinity Rep; Geva Theatre Center; The Studio Theatre; American Repertory Theatre; Theatre for a New Audience; La Jolla Playhouse; CENTER STAGE Baltimore; Cincinnati Playhouse. Awards: Elliot Norton, IRNE, Connecticut Critics Circle remediossound.com

ELENA RING (Stage Manager)

They/Them. Elena is delighted to return for another production at Merrimack Repertory Theatre! Previous

MRT stage management credits include *Dishwasher Dreams, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, and the 45th & 46th Annual Gala Radio Plays. They supported productions as a substitute Production Assistant for *The Porch on Windy Hill and Spiritus/Virgil's Dance*. In addition to their production work, Elena served as MRT's Company Manager from 2023 - 2025, where they oversaw artist hospitality, housing, and travel for MRT artists. Elena holds a BFA in Stage and Production Management from Emerson College. Endless thanks to this incredible production team, my friends & family, and my dear Molly—your support makes it all possible.

EMILY ALLINSON (Props Artisan)

She/Her. **Merrimack Repertory**

Theatre: Props artisan for *Gaslight, A Christmas Carol, The Porch on Windy Hill, and The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe.*

Regional: Greater Boston Stage Company (*Boulevard of Bold Dreams, Clue, Titanish, Dial M for Murder, Guys and Dolls*) Peterborough Players (All productions since 2018 including *The Drowsy Chaperone, She Loves Me, Our Town, Cabaret, Noises Off, and The Man of La Mancha*). Emily has been working as a props supervisor/designer and theatre technician in New England since graduating college in 2017. Primarily, she is the props supervisor for the Peterborough Players in New Hampshire.

WHO'S WHO

TED HEWLETT (Fight Director)

He/Him. **Broadway:** *Shōgun*. **Off-Broadway:** *Bill W. and Dr. Bob*. **New York:** Pan Asian Rep, Mettawee River Theatre, Lincoln Center Institute. **Boston:** Huntington Theatre, A.R.T., SIT! Company/ArtsEmerson, Lyric Stage, SpeakEasy Stage, Actors' Shakespeare Project, New Rep, Gloucester Stage, Boston Ballet, Boston Lyric Opera. **Regional:** Hartford Stage, Shakespeare & Co., Shakespeare Theatre Company, Elm Shakespeare, Kennedy Center, Syracuse Stage, Birmingham Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival. **Film/Television:** *Hook*, *Army of Darkness*, *Brush Up Your Shakespeare*. **Education:** MFA in Acting, Brandeis University. **Professional Positions:** Faculty at Emerson College, Shakespeare & Company.

MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE (www.mrt.org)

Merrimack Repertory Theatre (MRT) builds community through theatre. Our shows celebrate new stories, new interpretations of classics, new voices on stage, new audiences, and new collaborations that help people feel, think, and connect. As one of the leading performing arts organizations in the Merrimack Valley, we aim to enhance the quality of life in our region by creating space for joy, thought, conversation, and shared experiences. We are a hub for compassionate community, dynamic cultural

expression, learning experiences, and economic vitality. We lead with artistic excellence. We foster a culture of belonging and inclusion. We embrace lifelong learning and education. We practice sustainable stewardship of resources. As a non-profit, we aim to provide a welcoming and inclusive space for all. We partner with businesses and other non-profits to fully engage the community; and contribute to the economic and cultural vitality of Lowell. Recent acclaimed productions include *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, *Spiritus/Virgil's Dance*, *The Porch on Windy Hill*, *Letters from Home*, *The 39 Steps*, *Best Summer Ever*, *Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End*, *Cambodian Rock Band*, *KNYUM*, *The Rise and Fall of Holly Fudge*, and *What You Are Now*.

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BY **WILLIAM GOLDMAN**

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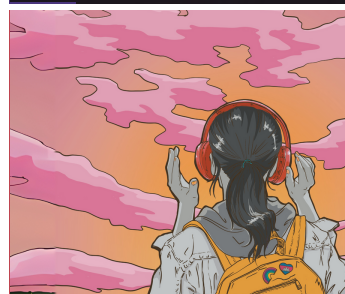
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PHOTO BY MEG MOORE/MEGPIX.COM: Kalean Ung in *Letters from Home*

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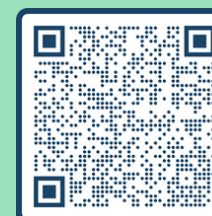
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