

The Game's Afoot

(Holmes for the Holidays)
Audition Information



Written by Ken Ludwig

Directed by Alec Adsett

Auditions

28th and 30th of November 2017

Sandgate Town Hall

Corner of Seymour and Brighton streets

7.00 pm to 9.00 pm

The Game's Afoot Performances: 5 shows March 9,10 17, 18 and a matinee on the 19th

Thank you for your interest in auditioning for Sandgate's Theatres Production of "The Game's Afoot" by Ken Ludwig.

If you like fast pace, BIG acting and making audiences laugh themselves silly, this is the show for you.

William Gillette is an eccentric and famed actor who is known the world over for his interpretation of Sherlock Holmes. While recovering after an apparent attempt on his life during a performance, Gillette invites a few friends and colleagues to his Connecticut mansion to celebrate Christmas Eve. In the spirit of the classic who-dunnit murder mystery, the evening unfolds with many twists, turns and surprises. At times, you may not even be able to tell who done what!

Following are the roles in the script of The Game's Afoot. It is important to note that, as in any farce, every character plays a crucial role in the telling of this story. While the story is built around the historical character of William Gillette, this show is truly an ensemble event. While actors for these roles do not have to be the age indicated, they will be playing characters in this age range:

William Gillette (early 50s): Eccentric yet lovable, actor extraordinaire.

Martha Gillette (mid-70s): Always a mother, Martha lives with William in his Connecticut castle.

Felix Geisel: (mid 40s): Member of William's theatre ensemble, friend since childhood.

Madge Geisel: (mid 40s): Wife of Felix and also a member of the ensemble.

Simon Bright: (mid 20s): Sometimes naive but always earnest member of the ensemble.

Aggie Wheeler: (mid 20s): A sweet, lovable and adoring member of the cast.

Inspector Goring: (40-50): Local police officer, she is sometimes addled but known for closing cases.

Daria Chase: (early 50s): The most unexpected guest, Daria is a local critic who never stops.

As you consider auditioning for this show, there is an important element to remember. Comedy, and especially farce, is a demanding affair. The show is high-energy with lots of movement and pace. There is smooching and falling and running and all kinds of merriment. The complexity of a show like this is easy to underestimate so please make sure that you and your schedule for this time period will allow you to go all in.

Having said that, there is also nothing more fun than putting together a show that provides high entertainment and laughter to hundreds of people. Being a part of The Game's Afoot will be a memorable experience and, with a chance to create long lasting friendships.

I encourage you to review the attached material and if this seems like something you could really jump into, come audition!

Audition Preparation

1. Complete the attached audition form and bring it with you to auditions.
2. At the audition, we will ask you to read from one or more of the script excerpts attached. You don't need to memorize the lines, but it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the excerpts. We will be looking to get a feel for your personality, reading ability and what it would be like to work with you on this show. The more you relax and have fun with the script, the better your audition will go. You may read multiple times with multiple other people so be prepared to stay for the entire audition period.
3. Please consult the schedule in this audition pack to confirm you are available for the dates of rehearsals and shows. Mark on the audition sheet any days/dates you will NOT be available. There can be some flexibility on rehearsals, but the show dates are fixed.
4. It is my intent to not have callbacks, but if necessary, we will do so within a day or two of the second audition. Either way, by December 3rd you will receive a call to either offer you a role, request a callback, or to let you know that the roles have been cast.
5. For those cast in the play, it is a requirement that you become a financial member of Sandgate Theatre Inc as soon as possible from the start of our first rehearsal.

Thank you again for taking the time and effort to audition. Alec Adsett, Director Phone: 0427133667.

GILLETTE and AGGIE

Note: The other guests have just left the room, leaving Gillette and Aggie alone for a brief moment.

GILLETTE. You didn't tell me.

AGGIE. I couldn't. I didn't have the courage.

GILLETTE. Courage?

AGGIE. I didn't want you to think less of me.

GILLETTE. But Simon is a fine fellow.

AGGIE. He's more than that!

GILLETTE. What I mean is -

AGGIE. I know what you mean. He's ordinary. He's "nice." He's easy to please. Well he is those things. And he's in love with me.

GILLETTE. Are you in love with him?

AGGIE. (*hurt*) Of course I am. I wouldn't have married him otherwise. (*Increasingly upset*) And he's very, very kind. When I needed him, he was there in an instant.

GILLETTE. Of course he was.

AGGIE. But I was in love with you. You just...you didn't ask me. I gave you every chance. I offered you everything!

GILLETTE. I know you did. And I was too foolish to take you up on it. I had some misguided notion that I was being loyal to my wife's memory.

AGGIE. It's been ten years since your wife died.

GILLETTE. Yes, I know.

AGGIE. (*In his arms*) Oh, William...

GILLETTE. Aggie, listen. You're going to be fine. The best man won. I'm sure of it. And for heaven's sake, just look at me. I'm old enough to be your slightly older brother.

(She laughs nervously.)

AGGIE. Thanks. Thanks a million It's just that 1...1 mean, I thought that you ...felt something...

(Almost breaking down)

You treat everything as a joke! Even that horrible attempt on your life!

GILLETTE. Not as a joke, my dear, but as a game, which is a different thing entirely. Look, we have chosen this mad life of ours, and we'd be insane not to accept it for what it is. Do I go to an office? No. Do I wear a tie to work? No. We're actors. We wear silly costumes. We put on noses made of putty, for God's sake. We don't want to be grownups. We're all Peter Pans and a good thing it is too. I don't want to leave all the fun behind because I've reached some magical age of regret. That's what they want us to do, you know, all those gray faceless accountants, and I won't do it. I won't. I don't treat life as a joke - I treat it as the most glorious game ever invented. Love and heartbreak? Game. Life and death? The greatest game, the biggest adventure. Shakespeare got it right on the nose. Henry the Fifth charging into battle against overwhelming odds and what does he cry? "*It's all a game and*

if I die, I die!"

So let them praise me, hate me or shoot at me - but at the end of the battle, I will have lived, even for a moment. And if you think you need Simon in order to live like that, then take him, by all means! Cling to him! Don't hesitate for a second! ...I will, however miss you unutterably.

(Beat. AGGIE is speechless. Her heart starts racing and she realizes how much she loves him. She leans in to kiss him - when sounds from the terrace interrupt the moment.)

Felix, Inspector and Gillette

(During the following, **FELIX** does his best to shield a dead body which is behind the sofa. He also tries to draw **GILLETTE's** attention to the body, but **GILLETTE** just doesn't get it.)

FELIX. Hello.

INSPECTOR. There is no means of escape, Professor Moriarty!

(*She chuckles.*)

I recognize you from Mr. Gillette's most interesting play.

FELIX. Oh. I see. Did you enjoy it?

INSPECTOR. I found it unlikely, illogical, far-fetched and I enjoyed it immensely. Especially when you plunged to your death.

FELIX- Thank you.

INSPECTOR. I've always liked Sherlock Holmes, of course. You can't be in my business and not appreciate him. He's such a misfit. I like misfits. I don't know why.

{**GILLETTE** and **FELIX** glance at each other. The **INSPECTOR** strolls around the room observing things.}

FELIX. I don't suppose there's much crime out here in Connecticut, eh?

INSPECTOR. Oh, you'd be surprised. I have loads of cases, I just can't solve any of them. Ha! I seem to miss the clues for some reason. And yet I do catch all the criminals in the end. I don't know how exactly ... "*The evil that men do lives after them! The good is oft interr'd with their bones!*" I thought I'd be an actress when I was a youngster, you see. I just never had the confidence, alas. But then I got a nose for blood, and that's all I needed. "Blood will have blood!" "Is this a dagger which I see before me?!!" No, it isn't, actually, it's missing.

GILLETTE. I'm sorry?

INSPECTOR. The dagger from your wall. This spot here. I can see the discoloration from where the dagger used to be.

FELIX. You know, it's unusual meeting a woman detective. I didn't know they existed. Are you one of many?

INSPECTOR. Not yet, I'm afraid, but I believe you might call me the wave of the future. I think of myself as a pioneer, heading West, fertilizing the land as I go.

FELIX. I don't want to think too hard about that...

GILLETTE. So, what can we do for you, Inspector?

INSPECTOR. Well, a few minutes ago, someone called the police station and reported a murder. According to the operator, the call came from this house.

FELIX. This house?

GILLETTE. That's ridiculous.

INSPECTOR. Then it wasn't either of you or who called?

FELIX. No.

GILLETTE. Not at all.

INSPECTOR. I see. And how is your arm feeling?

GILLETTE. I beg your pardon?

INSPECTOR. The arm where you were shot two weeks ago on the stage of your theatre in New York City. It was in all the papers. You see, I believe that if these two events- the shooting and the call - are unrelated, then we've got ourselves quite a coincidence. And coincidence makes me very suspicious.

(*Suddenly turning to **FELIX** who has been trying to get **GILLETTE** to notice the dead body on the floor.*)

Do you have a twitch?

FELIX'. Twitch? No. Yes. Why?

GILLETTE. Inspector, the fact is, nothing unpleasant has happened here tonight. Unless you count my rather poor singing voice during the Christmas carols. Ha ha!

FELIX. Ha ha!

GILLETTE. Ha ha ha!

FELIX. Ha ha ha!

(GILLETTE now sees the body behind the sofa. If GILLETTE is still sitting opposite, perhaps FELIX lifts the leg of the cadaver behind the INSPECTOR's back.)

GILLETTE. Hahahahaha. YAHHHHHAHAH AHAHA!

INSPECTOR. Is something the matter?

GILLETTE. No, no. I just remembered a good joke.

INSPECTOR. Can you tell us?

GILLETTE. Well ...there were these, uh, two Irishmen, and one says to the other, "Begorah, what's that dead body doin' on me livin' room floor." And the other one says -

FELIX. "Begorah, because the door to the bar wouldn't close!"

BOTH. *{desperately}* Hahahahahahaha!

(The INSPECTOR looks bewildered)

INSPECTOR. Mr. Gillett e, if you don't mind I'd like to take a look around for a moment. I'd like to jiggle your handles, as it were.

GILLETTE. Oh, absolutely. Feel free. Why don't you start in the kitchen? It's right through here, last door on the right.

INSPECTOR. Thanks so much, I'll just be a few minutes. *(The INSPECTOR exits. GILLETTE, smiling, watches her go.)*

FELIX. *(Smiling broadly through his teeth)* Is she gone yet?

GILLETTE. Not quite ...Yes, she's gone! Now why didn't you hide the body?!

FELIX. That pull-thing of yours didn't work properly and I had to drag her out and then it closed all by itself!

GILLETTE. You didn't pull it properly.

FELIX. Of course I pulled it properly!

(The INSPECTOR reenters unexpectedly - and the two men jump at the sound of her voice - and shield the back of the sofa.)

INSPECTOR. Excuse me -

GILLETTE & FELIX. Ahh!

INSPECTOR. I forgot to ask, but is there anyone else staying here at the moment?

GILLETTE. Yes, indeed, we have Felix's wife, Madge. And Aggie and Simon, all from the play you saw, and of course my mother, who's very, very old and asleep upstairs, so if you could avoid disturbing her...

INSPECTOR. Of course, but I'd like to speak with the others if you don't mind.

GILLETTE. We'll call them down.

INSPECTOR. Thank you. I'll be in the kitchen.

MARTHA and GILLETTE

Note: In the living room of Gillette's home, Daria is lying dead on the floor

GILLETTE: *(on phone)* Hello, operator? Get me the police... P-0-L- .. yes, that's right, thank you ...Hello? Is this the police? I have to report a murder.

(At this moment, MARTHA enters from the hall.)

MARTHA. Willie, dear -

GILLETTE. Mother, stay out of this room!

MARTHA. Oh, don't be ridiculous.

GILLETTE. Mother, please, there's something I don't want you to see.

(Into the phone) Would you hold on a moment?

MARTHA. Who are you speaking with?

GILLETTE. The police actually. Now Mother listen. Brace yourself. This is going to be very upsetting, but Daria is dead.

MARTHA. Yes I know, dear. I killed her.

GILLETTE. What did you say?

MARTHA. I said I killed Daria.

GILLETTE. But she was murdered.

(He gestures up and down with his arm a few times, imitating the plunging of the knife.)

MARTHA. That was me, I'm afraid.

(MARTHA starts to cry. She's extremely upset.) Oh, Willie!!

GILLETTE. *(Into the phone)* I'll have to get back to you. *(He hangs up the phone.)* Mother, what happened?!

MARTHA. *(Weeping)* Oh I was just so angry at Daria for speaking to you the way she did that I lost my temper!

GILLETTE. But mother, she was only threatening me.

MARTHA. Well, she'd have done it, too. She was ruthless. She was evil! She was a theatre critic, for God's sake! *(She weeps.)* I suppose I'll go to jail now, won't I?

GILLETTE. No. No, you won't. I won't let that happen, I promise you.

MARTHA. But how is that possible?

GILLETTE. I don't know yet, but you'll have to do everything I say.

MARTHA. I suppose I can try...

GILLETTE. Good. Now I want you to go upstairs and take one of your pills, it'll make you sleepy. No, take two.

MARTHA. When I take two I can't even see straight.

GILLETTE. Good, and then go to bed. We'll discuss it in the morning.

MARTHA. Oh, Willie, I'm so sorry for doing such a terrible thing, but I couldn't let her hurt you, I just couldn't.

GILLETTE. I understand. Now up you go. Straight to bed. You promised.

MARTHA. *(Drying her tears)* Oh, all right. Nighty-night.

GILLETTE. Sleep tight.

MARTHA. Don't let the bed bugs bite. *(She hugs her son.)* Oh, Willie, I love you so much.

GILLETTE. And I love you.

MARTHA. Incidentally, that taxi Daria ordered before she died? I cancelled it. I took the view that she wouldn't need it once she was dead. Good-night, dear.

FELIX and DARIA

DARIA. Do you know, I've been thinking about what happened to Aggie? Pretty young actress, no money, meets eligible young man who's very rich. He falls deeply in love with her, marries her and promptly dies on the honeymoon and I think to myself: she must be the luckiest girl in the entire world.

FELIX. Daria, she lost her husband, for heaven's sake.

DARIA. Oh, please. Husbands are a dime a dozen. They come and go like ducks around a country pond. They waddle around looking self-important, they quack as though someone is actually listening to them, and then, mercifully, they die off and disappear.

FELIX. That is very endearing of you, Daria. Why not just take an ax and chop her feet off?

DARIA. Oh, grow up. The little gold-digger hit the jack-pot. What more does she want, a trophy? And she got Simon in the bargain. Now let's stop talking about them. Let's talk about me instead. What is it you like most about me?

FELIX. Your shyness.

DARIA. I like you because you're handsome. And stoic. Doesn't all of Gillette's success make you want to scream? Aren't you seething inside with jealousy?

FELIX. No, he's my best friend.

DARIA. Really? You didn't try to shoot him, then.

FELIX. How could I? I was on stage when he was shot.

DARIA. So was everybody who's here this weekend. Except dear, innocent Martha.

FELIX. And you.

DARIA. Why would I want to shoot him? I haven't slept with him yet. Now stop being stoic and kiss me.

FELIX. I'm a married man.

DARIA. (*cuddling up to him*) You mean your lips don't work at all anymore?

FELIX. Daria ...

DARIA. Ten minutes, upstairs, they'd never miss us.

FELIX. Daria!

DARIA. We never get to spend time together!

FELIX. We could be spending a great deal of time together, in there eating dinner.

DARIA. You're angry about the review, aren't you?

FELIX. You did call me a side of beef.

DARIA. But in a nice way! Oh, Felix, I was just trying to get a laugh. I should tell the truth when I write, shouldn't I? Truth and beauty, as the poet Shelley said: it is all we know on earth and all we need to know.

FELIX. Keats.

DARIA. Hmm?

FELIX. It was the poet Keats.

DARIA. You know, Felix, you're even more attractive when you stand up to me.

Simon, Aggie, Madge, Felix

SIMON. Are you holding up all right?

AGGIE. I think so.

SIMON. He'll be fine with it, just trust me.

AGGIE. Right.

SIMON. Good egg.

AGGIE. ...You're sure?

SIMON. Absolutely. I want to see their faces when we give them the news. They'll say, "What?! What?!"

(He makes a face and they laugh happily. At which point, MADGE and FELIX enter)

FELIX. Greetings and salutations!

MADGE. "What country, friend is this?"

FELIX. "It is Illyria, lady."

MADGE. "My brother, he is in Elysium. Perchance he is not drowned! What think you, Sailor?"

FELIX. "It is perchance that you yourself were saved." Ha!

(They all embrace and laugh.)

Merry Christmas! Here's to the revels. They shall be non-stop and very drunken. Do you realize that we've been on vacation for a mere two weeks and already I've missed you terribly?

SIMON. Thank you, Felix.

FELIX. Not you, you idiot. Aggie. I've been in love with her since I was uh oh, there's my wife.

MADGE. Keep talking, darling. It will sound so wonderful when it's repeated in court.

AGGIE. How was your time off?

MADGE. Luxurious. We went to a spa. Felix hated it.

FELIX. There was nothing to eat. Or drink! And we had to do some bizarre Buddhist exercise.

MADGE. It's called Yoga.

FELIX. I thought that was the white pudding stuff.

MADGE. That was yoghurt.

FELIX. It was like spoiled milk with the texture of bone marrow. It'll never catch on.

AGGIE. I can't get over this place, can you?

MADGE. He said it was something, but I had no idea.

AGGIE. Why would he build a castle on the Connecticut River?

FELIX. Why does Gillette do anything? The man is insane.

SIMON. I thought he was your best friend.

FELIX. And I repeat, the man is insane.

MADGE. He builds an awfully nice house, though. It would be excellent for a murder.

SIMON. Why a murder?

MADGE. It's isolated, there are loads of rooms for hiding the body, and it's on a river so you can drown people. What more do you want, an ax?

FELIX. *(nodding to the wall)* He has one.

SIMON. Two.

AGGIE. Three.

FELIX. As well as two broadswords, a garrote and a brace of pistols. If Connecticut is ever attacked by Rhode Island, this house will be the first line of defense.

The Game's Afoot Rehearsal Schedule

Bracken Ridge Uniting Church

Corner of Bracken Road and Pellinore Street

Bracken Ridge

12 - 12 -2017	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Cast and crew intro and read through.
14 - 12 -2017	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act One
19 - 12 -2017	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act One
21 - 12 -2017	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act One
04 - 01 -2017	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act One
09 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act Two
11 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act Two
16 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act Two
18 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act Two
23 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act One
25 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act One
30 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act One
01 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act One
25 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act Two
28 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Photos and costumes
30 - 01 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act Two
01 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act Two
04 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Act Two
06 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
08 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
11 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
13 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
15 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
18 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
20 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
22 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
25 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
27 - 02 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
01 - 03 -2018	Bracken Ridge Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Full run through
04 - 03 -2018	Sandgate Hall 2.00 PM until 9.00 PM. Times TBC.	full run through.
06 - 03 -2018	Sandgate Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Tech, Lights And full run through.
08 - 03 -2018	Sandgate Hall 7.00 PM until 9.00 PM	Tech, Lights And full run through.
09 - 03 -2018	Opening Night	



SHOW: The Game's Afoot by Ken Ludwig

Name: _____

Contact Phone: _____

Contact Email: _____

Please note: You must be a Financial Member of Z-PAC Theatre to be involved in a production.

1. Will you accept any role in this production? Yes No

If not, please list which roles you will accept:

2. Please list all relevant theatre experience (you may attach a résumé if you wish):

3. Would you be interested in working backstage if you are not cast? Yes No

4. Please list all one-time conflicts below between now and the show (e.g. work commitments, vacations etc)

5. Please mark all repeating conflicts on the schedule below and give the times they occur. (i.e. dance every Thursday from 6:00-9:00).

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