



# PROLOGUE

December 2017

## 8 Reasons to See The Games's Afoot, or Holmes for the Holidays December 8–17

1. The cast features AFD favorites like Iain Bason, Linda Burt, Kathleen Dalton, Tom Formicola, and Randall Lawrence-Hurt.

2. The cast has new talents like Christine Chilingirian, Diana Doyle, and Melody Martin.

3. Playwright Ken Ludwig wrote this murderously funny play and is also the author of *Lend Me a Tenor* and *Moon Over Buffalo*.

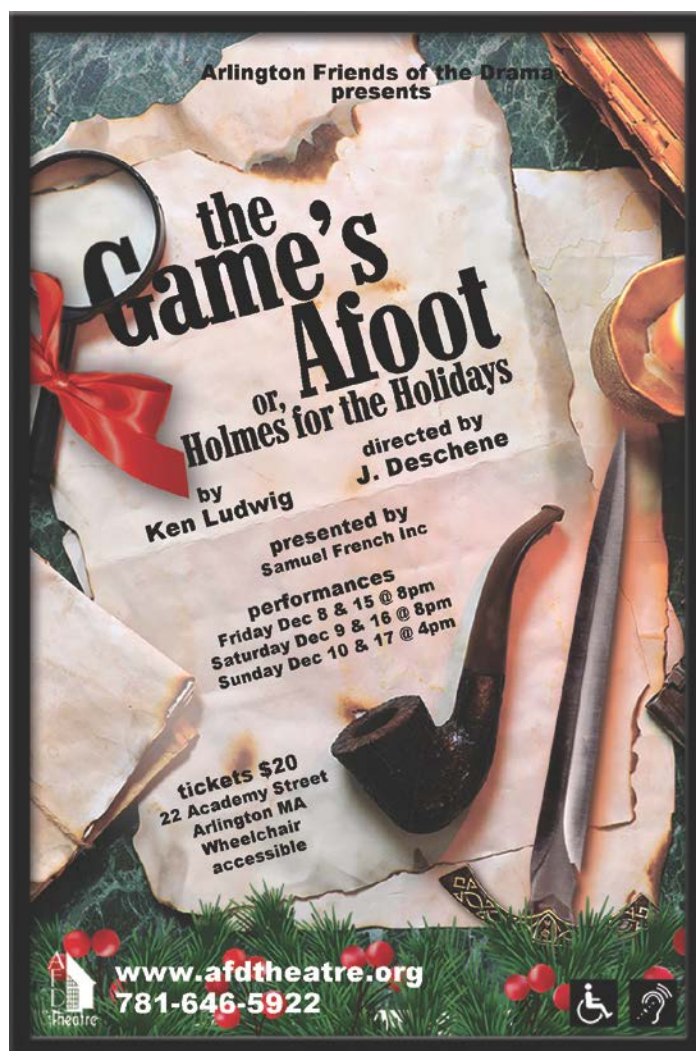
4. Iain Bason plays William Gillette, who was a real person. An American actor, Gillette (1853–1937) became famous for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes on the stages of the world. Gillette first played Holmes on Broadway in 1899. His iconic portrayal of the character cemented Sherlock's image in popular culture, introducing audiences to his curved pipe and his deerstalker cap. As Holmes, Gillette was the first to utter "Oh, this is elementary, my dear fellow," which would later become the famous line, "Elementary, my dear Watson."

5. The set and props do imaginative things. We can't give away anything else without a spoiler!

6. It's the perfect holiday show for friends and family.

7. It's very, very funny. The cast could not stop laughing during rehearsals, even after several readings. (See the rehearsal photos inside.)

8. It's directed by J. Deschene, a powerhouse of talent who has worked as an actor, singer, and director in Greater Boston since 2005. She's no stranger to mysteries, having helmed all three Hercule Poirot segments for the Post-Meridian Radio Players' Super Sleuths series.



# **The Game's Afoot, or Holmes for the Holidays**

## **Show Dates**

Fridays, December 8 and 15 at 8 PM

Saturdays, December 9 and 16 at 8 PM

Sundays, December 10 and 17 at 4 PM

**Champagne reception after the opening night performance.**

**Talkback after the first Sunday show.**

## **Tickets On Sale Now**

## **Cast**



William Gillette: Iain Bason

Martha Gillette: Linda Burt

Felix Geisel: Tom Formicola

Madge Geisel: Kathleen Dalton

Aggie Wheeler: Melody Martin

Simon Bright: Randall Lawrence-Hurt

Inspector Harriet Goring: Christine Chilingirian

Daria Chase: Diana Doyle

## **Production Team**

Director: J. Deschene

Assistant Director and Dramaturg: Dylan A. Turner

Production Manager: Judy Weinberg

Assistant Production Manager: Barbara Moss

Stage Manager: Maren Reisch

Set Designer and Set Tech: Mark Bastoni

Costume Designer: Circe Rowan

Lighting Designer: Greg Mancusi-Ungaro

Assistant Lighting Designer: Eleanor Mancusi-Ungaro

Sound Designer: Tom Powers

Sound Board Operator: Marjorie Hilton

Props and Set Dressing: Evelyn Corsini Alcorn,  
Janice Sophis

Makeup and Hair Design: Deanna Lander

Publicity: Mary Babic

Box Office: Gareth Williams

# “The Game’s Afoot” Spotlight: Evelyn Corsini Alcorn

She may not sing, act, or dance, but she’s played a starring role in nearly every dazzling production at Arlington Friends of the Drama (AFD) Theatre over nearly 30 years.

She’s Evelyn Corsini Alcorn, and she’s the hard-working, creative, tireless Prop Lady. She’s the one in the apron who manages dozens of items, from enormous to tiny, from finger puppets to chaise lounges, from daggers to tuna sandwiches. She crafts them by hand, catalogues them meticulously for each moment, finds them in hidden pockets around the state – and more.

In fact, doing props has become a sort of way of life for Evelyn. She spends a lot of time at yard sales and in thrift shops, sometimes buying things that she thinks may be useful – eventually, if not now. She scrounges around other theater companies in the area, and often pulls from her own home.

## Finding joy in the magic of theater

Evelyn spent many years as a social worker at Children’s Hospital in Boston, and, while it was a rewarding career, it was also draining. “So many tragic and sad moments, helping sick children and their families,” she notes. “One New Year’s, I once again made the resolution to have more fun, and when I looked back at the year that had passed, I spotted the one thing that had brought me joy. And that was making a video for work. I had helped write it, and played a social worker (named Evelyn) in it – and it was so much fun.”

It was her first taste of doing anything theatrical, and she was hooked. She’d seen a play at AFD, so she headed over one day to see if she could help.

“It was a Saturday morning, and I gathered my courage and walked in and said ‘Hello, I’d like to help.’ And that was it. Longtime member Phyllis Uloth and some other folks welcomed her warmly and immediately put her to work. She helped with a mailing, held a ladder, painted a set, made a flat, and pitched in where needed. “One of the first things I did was to create the effect of pigeon poop on a roof, with Charlie Carr.”

## From Italian newspapers to pompoms

Since that fateful morning, Evelyn has participated in the majority of plays each season. She is a walking history of AFD. Among her most memorable prop moments:

- During *Titanic: The Musical* (“one of the greatest shows of all time here,” she says), there’s a critical moment when the passengers get the first clue that something is terribly wrong: a cart slowly slides across the stage, as the ship begins to list to one side. The challenge was to move it gradually, seamlessly, and invisibly. Evelyn and Charlotte Kelley (another frequent Prop Lady who works tirelessly for AFD) rigged it with fishing line and wheels, and “practiced it so many times,” says Evelyn.
- For “Dancing at Lughnasa” (2007), she and her husband, Tony Alcorn, made a stone wall out of real stones, from his land in New Hampshire. He helped make the peat for the fire, out of foam, as he knew from his childhood in Ireland exactly what it looks like.

## “You can’t just have fun”

While Evelyn loves doing props, she’s also willing to do what she calls “the hard work of running a theater.” She served three three-year terms on the Board, as secretary, vice president, and membership secretary. “You can’t just have fun.”

Still, props is her favorite domain, and she is present throughout most of the rehearsal process and for every show. “It appeals to my skills for organization, for being methodical. When you’re running a show, and everyone is backstage, and it’s a flurry of lights and costumes and sets -- it’s great to know that everything is all set up and in proper order. I feel like I’m contributing to making the show really good—and each night it gets better.”

*Contributed by Mary Babic*

## President's Corner: A Note from David Warnock



On November 18, 2017, our building was filled with laughter, tears, and music as family and friends celebrated the life of George C. Rogers, Jr.

Mary and Caleb Rogers shared touching and humorous stories of their father's love of learning, of useful things, of carefully chosen words, and of course, theater.

Inspired by George's gentle presence and heart, we collected some thoughts that he might appreciate.

"The theater is one of the few places left in the bright and noisy world where we sit in the quiet dark together, to be awake."—*Sarah Ruhl*

"I like the ephemeral thing about theatre, every performance is like a ghost—it's there and then it's gone."—*Maggie Smith*

"To enter a theatre for a performance is to be inducted into a magical space, to be ushered into the sacred arena of the imagination."—*Simon Callow*

"When you step from the wings onto the stage you go from total blackness to a blinding hot glare. After a moment you adjust, but there is that moment. Like being inside lightning."  
—*Meg Howrey*

"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart."—*Helen Keller*

"Life and art are one.  
Tools and spirit,  
Reverence and lust for life well lived in common things."—*Anonymous*

Wishing peace to Sally, Mary, Caleb, the Rogers family, and our AFD family, we close with two passages from George's memorial service.

"Perhaps they are not stars, but rather openings in heaven, where the love of our lost ones pours through and shines upon us to let us know they are happy."  
—*Eskimo Legend imprinted on the memento bookmark that the Rogers family presented to memorial service guests*

"In the theater, admiring a beautiful set, we remember George."  
—*A Litany of Remembrance, November 18, 2017*

*David Warnock, President*



## Friendly

Jim Grana is now the contact for AFD Friendly news. Please send your Friendly news to Jim at [actorone\\_2000@yahoo.com](mailto:actorone_2000@yahoo.com).

With deepest sadness, we mourn the loss of AFD member George C. Rogers, Jr., who passed away in October 2017. George was a longtime active member who contributed his time and talents to AFD. He was always ready to introduce newcomers to AFD by presenting the latest brochure he always carried. We extend our deepest sympathies to his family.

**Have You Seen “The Game’s Afoot”  
Promo Video? Click on the image to  
see who’s tracking down the clues  
around Arlington Friends of the  
Drama’s theater!**



## BOX OFFICE CORNER

Order your tickets for *The Games’s Afoot, or Holmes for the Holidays* online at <http://www.ticketstage.com/T/AFD>. All ticket exchanges must be made through the Box Office. The easiest way to contact the box office is by email at [boxoffice@afdtheatre.org](mailto:boxoffice@afdtheatre.org).

## Shop at Amazon and Donate to AFD

When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), it’s the same thing as shopping on Amazon with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to AFD Theatre. On your first visit to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), select Arlington Friends of the Drama Inc before you begin shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at will result in a donation to AFD Theatre.

### The Fine Print

The Prologue is a publication of Arlington Friends of the Drama, published four to five times a year. Submissions of articles, information, ideas, and feedback are welcome from members, and may be submitted to Nancy Rogier, Prologue Editor, at [nancyrogier95@gmail.com](mailto:nancyrogier95@gmail.com). Annual membership/subscription to AFD is \$70. Membership includes a ticket to each show, opportunities to get involved in all aspects of the theater, The Prologue, and various social activities.

### Prologue Staff

Nancy Rogier, Editor  
Tom Lawrence, Phyllis Uloth, Proofreaders

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**SHATTUCK ACE HARDWARE STORE**



for paying for the printing of tickets  
for our 95th season!

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# Behind the Scenes:

## *The Game's Afoot, or Holmes for the Holidays*



Christine Chilingirian and Tom Formicola



Director J. Deschene



Tom Formicola



Stage Manager Maren Reisch



Linda Burt



Melody Martin

Photos by Mary Babic. [See more on the AFD blog!](#)



# Our 2017–2018 AFD Season

## The Light in the Piazza

**October 13–29, 2017**

Music, Lyrics, and Book by William Finn  
and Rachel Sheinkin

Book by Craig Lucas

Music and Lyrics by Adam Guettel

Stage Director, Ryan Began

Musical Director, John Eldridge

Choreographer, Daisy Giunta

Soaring melodies fill this romantic musical about young love and family secrets revealed against the backdrop of 1950s Italy.



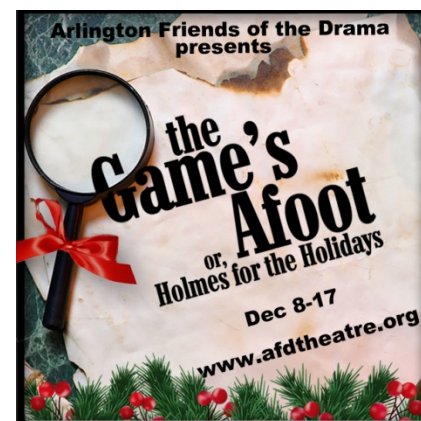
## The Game's Afoot, or Holmes for the Holidays

**December 8–17, 2017**

By Ken Ludwig

Stage Director, J. Deschene

It's December 1936, and Broadway star William Gillette, admired the world over for his role as Sherlock Holmes, has invited his fellow cast-members to his Connecticut castle for a weekend of revelry. The danger and hilarity are nonstop in this glittering whodunit set during the Christmas holidays.



## 9 to 5: The Musical

**March 9–26, 2018**

Music and Lyrics by Dolly Parton

Book by Patricia Resnick

Stage Director, Paul Murphy

Musical Director, Anthony Sacco

Choreographer, Bradford Robinson

Three unlikely friends conspire to take control of their company and learn that there's nothing they can't do—even in a "man's world."



## Unnecessary Farce

**May 11–20, 2018**

By Paul Slade Smith

Director, Stephen Rourke

Two cops. Three crooks. Eight doors. Go. A comedy that pairs classic farce with a contemporary American plot. Dazzlingly funny!



A Company of Friends  
22 Academy Street  
Arlington MA 02476  
Phone: 781-646-9337  
Ticket line: 781-646-5922  
Web Address: [www.afdtheatre.org](http://www.afdtheatre.org)



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Holmes for the Holidays  
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Tickets on Sale Now

Spotlight on Evelyn Corsini  
Alcorn: Finding Joy in the  
Magic of Theater