

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest

Dramatic comedy by Dale Wasserman

From the novel by Ken Kesey

Directed by Dana Skiles

Run dates: Oct. 3-6 & 10-13, 2019

Questions? Contact director at info@rhplayers.com

Rebellious rogue Randle P. McMurphy contrives reassignment from a prison farm to an airy mental institution to serve out a short penal sentence. This, he learns, may have been an error when he meets his match in the passive-aggressive disciplinarian despot Nurse Ratched, who oversees the psychiatric ward with a tight rein and hard line. While McMurphy tries to liberate the hospital inmates with basketball games, TV, partying, and even women, the uncompromising Ratched squeezes her iron fist, and their battle of wills influences the ward's patients to start thinking for themselves.

NOTE: There is a range of strong themes explored within this play, including, but not limited to, profanity, sexuality, suicide, murder, and death.

CHARACTERS: 12 males & 4 females. Ethnically diverse cast desired. Flexible age ranges for all characters.

RANDLE P. MCMURPHY – (*m, patient*) A gambler, a con man, and a backroom boxer. He serves as the dominant force challenging the establishment and the ultimate savior of the victimized patients. *Will have kissing scenes and a choreographed fight scene. Wears just a towel in another scene.*

NURSE RATCHED – (*f, staff*) Head of the hospital ward. She is an attractive woman who under the surface is dark and "runs the machine." She weakens her patients through a psychologically manipulative program designed to destroy their self-esteem. *Will have a choreographed fight scene.*

CHIEF BROMDEN – (*m, patient*) Huge, bull-muscled son of an Indian Chief. He has been in the hospital for ten years, longer than any other patient in the ward. Bromden sees modern society as a huge, oppressive conglomeration that he calls the Combine, and the hospital as a place meant to fix people who do not conform.

AIDE WARREN and AIDE WILLIAMS – (*m, staff*) Daytime aides. Nurse Ratched hired them because they are filled with hatred and will submit to her wishes completely.

NURSE FLINN – (*f, staff*) A vapid girl with apprehensive eyes. She wears a gold cross at her throat, a sign of her strict Catholic upbringing. She is fearful of the patients' sexuality.

DALE HARDING – (*m, patient*) College-educated with a sharp tongue. He is President of the Patients' Council. Although he is married to a woman he is gay. He has difficulty dealing with the overwhelming social prejudice against gays, so he hides in the hospital voluntarily.

BILLY BIBBIT – (*m, patient – in his 20's*) Shy and has a bad stutter. He seems and acts younger than his age. Dominated by his mother, one of Nurse Ratched's close friends. Billy is voluntarily in the hospital, as he is afraid of the outside world.

SCANLON – (*m, patient*) Involuntarily committed to the hospital, he has fantasies of blowing things up.

CHESWICK – (*m, patient*) Eager and quick to argue or fight. Aggressively defiant yet cringing. All talk, no action.

MARTINI – (*m, patient*) A little Italian man who lives in a world of delusional hallucinations.

RUCKLY – (*m, patient*) A Chronic patient. Was once curable, but was transformed into a Chronic due to a botched lobotomy.

SPIVEY – (*m, staff*) Administrator of the mental institution. He is a calm, mature, gray-haired doctor. He doubts that anything is wrong with McMurphy's mind, but he defers to the opinion of Nurse Ratched.

AIDE TURKLE – (*m, staff*) Nighttime orderly for Nurse Ratched's ward. He is easygoing and kind.

CANDY STARR – (*f, non-hospital*) Beautiful, carefree prostitute. She comes to the ward for a late-night party that McMurphy arranges. *Will have kissing scenes.*

SANDRA – (*f, non-hospital*) Prostitute who comes with Candy to the late-night party. *Will have kissing scene.*