

The 39 Steps

Comedy adapted by Patrick Barlow

From the novel by John Buchan

From the Movie of Alfred Hitchcock licensed by ITV Global Entertainment Ltd

And an Original Concept by Simon Corble and Nobby Dimon

Directed by Jennifer Kingry

Run dates: August 15-18 & 22-25, 2019

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A bored Canadian living in London meets a woman with a thick accent who says she's a spy. When he takes her home, she is murdered. Soon, a mysterious organization called "The 39 Steps" is hot on the man's trail in a nationwide manhunt that climaxes in a death-defying finale! A riotous blend of virtuoso performances and wildly inventive stagecraft, The 39 Steps mixes a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, then adds a dash of Monty Python to create an intriguing, thrilling, riotous and unmissable comedy.

CHARACTERS: 3 m, 1 f

NOTE: The show has minimalist set and a small cast who interpret 35-plus characters. It is a fast-paced, high-energy production, lots of fun to perform. One actor plays the hero, Richard Hannay; an actress plays the three women with whom he has romantic entanglements; and two other actors (The Clowns) play *every other character in the show*: heroes, villains, men, women, children and even the occasional inanimate object. This often requires lightning fast quick-changes and occasionally for them to play multiple characters at once. The film's "serious" spy story is played mainly for laughs, and the script is full of allusions to (and puns on the titles of) various Alfred Hitchcock films.

All actors must be versatile with abilities in physical comedy, farce and an aptitude for dialects (working-class English, Scottish, cultured British and German). The ages given are for reference, not carved in stone.

ACTOR #1, m, plays RICHARD HANNAY: The hero (*age range early 30's to late 40's*). Described as "about 40. Pencil moustache. An attractive man, not too young and not too old...thinks of himself as commonplace...is drawn in against his best judgment into a mystery he vaguely understands..." Dialect: A Canadian with precise diction, not necessarily an English accent. The role requires stamina, physical comedy skills and excellent comic timing.

ACTOR #2, f - (*age range 25 - 40's*). The role requires versatility, stamina, excellent comic timing, and the romantic style of a Hitchcock leading lady.

- ANNABELLA SCHMIDT: An exotic secret agent in dire need of Hannay's help. *German accent.*
- PAMELA: A beautiful Englishwoman who is lured into Hannay's adventure but is skeptical of his claims of innocence. *Cultured English accent.*
- MARGARET: The farmer's wife, Margaret is a shy young woman who dreams of life and adventure in the city, who Hannay meets while he's on the run. *Scottish accent.*

ACTORS #3 and #4, m - THE CLOWNS: These two versatile performers play over 30 characters between them in the English Music Hall tradition, changing characters frequently, sometimes within seconds, using costumes and props from the simple to more detailed. The roles require versatility, stamina to perform fast-paced verbal and physical comedy; excellent comic timing and extreme focus. Here are a few of their major roles in *The 39 Steps*:

MR. MEMORY: A stage performer who has the ability to recall thousands of facts on command.

CROFTER: Margaret's husband. A crofter is a tenant farmer who rents land from a landlord. Suspicious and taciturn, he houses Hannay for a night while he's on the run.

MRS. JORDAN: Wife of Professor Jordan and the proprietor of Alt-na-Shellach.

PROFESSOR JORDAN: The mysterious resident of Alt-na-Shellach. Annabella Schmidt tells Hannay he must visit Professor Jordan to prevent British secrets from leaving the country.

THE HEAVIES: Two thugs who arrest Hannay and Pamela while disguised as police officers.

SHERIFF: A Scottish police officer and friend of Professor Jordan.

DUNWOODY: The master of ceremonies at a political rally. He mistakes Hannay for the guest speaker at the event and forces Hannay to give an impromptu speech.

MR. and MRS. MCGARRIGLE: An old couple that runs The McGarrigle Hotel, where Hannay and Pamela take shelter from the Heavies.

Dialects for The Clowns: A wide variety of English (upper and lower class), German, Scottish.