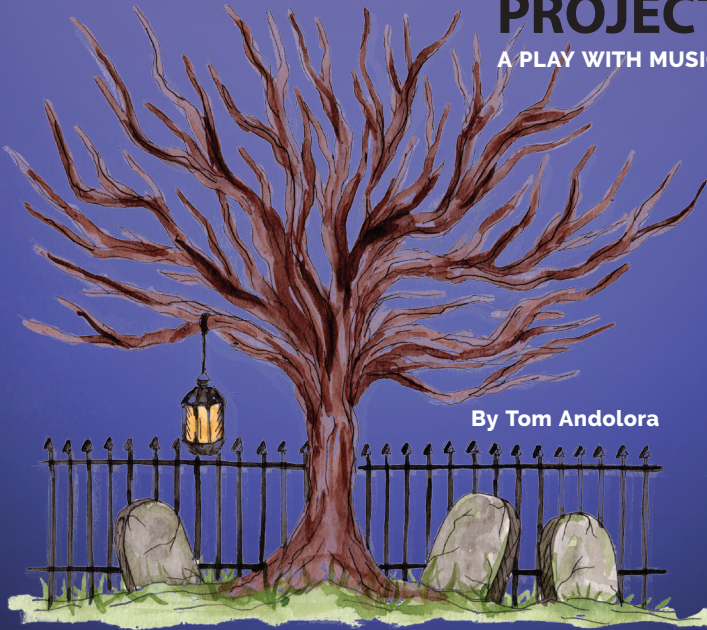


THE MONMOUTH COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE

PRESENTS

# THE SPOON RIVER

PROJECT  
A PLAY WITH MUSIC



By Tom Andolora

APRIL 7-10, 2022  
WELLS THEATER



1853



## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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Todd Quick

*To this generation I would say:  
Memorize some bit of verse of truth or beauty.  
It may serve a turn in your life.*

This excerpt from Mrs. George Reece's epitaph in *Spoon River Anthology* offers some timely advice. As I prepare to finish my final production here at Monmouth College, I am keenly aware of how frequently I process the events of my life through the words of a poet or playwright. More often than not, it's Shakespeare that provides a lens through which I see the world, but Edgar Lee Masters has proved himself to be a worthy understudy over these past few months. The character of George Gray ends his epitaph with a "bit of verse of truth" that feels like it was written for me.

*To put meaning in one's life may end in madness,  
But life without meaning is the torture  
Of restlessness and vague desire—  
It is a boat longing for the sea and yet afraid.*

And so, thank you to my truly excellent Theatre Department colleagues for sailing with me, and to my students, who create meaning for the voyage.

Thank you for supporting the arts at Monmouth College.

Enjoy the show.

Todd Quick  
Assistant Professor of Theatre

**THE MONMOUTH COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE**

**PRESENTS**

# ***THE SPOON RIVER PROJECT***

Based on *Spoon River Anthology* by Edgar Lee Masters

Adapted by Tom Andolora

Directed by Todd Quick

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**April 7 – 10, 2022**

**Thursday-Saturday 7:30 p.m. | Sunday 2 p.m.**

**Wells Theater**

Produced by Special Arrangement with Playscripts, Inc.  
([www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com))

The production will run approximately 75 minutes, with no intermission.

Please silence all electronics.

Restrooms and drinking fountains are located in the lobby.

Photography and recording of any kind is prohibited.

# THE TIME AND PLACE

The past. The fictional town of Spoon River, Illinois.

## THE CAST

ACTOR ONE	John Henderson
ACTOR TWO	Elijah Lind
ACTOR THREE	Andrew Cliffel
ACTOR FOUR	Xavion York
ACTOR FIVE	Allie Bryan
ACTOR SIX	Cullen Marshall
ACTRESS ONE	Kaitlyn Fisher
ACTRESS TWO	Reese Hill
ACTRESS THREE	Gabriela Madu
ACTRESS FOUR	Bekkah Gebe
ACTRESS FIVE	Celeste Lythgoe

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

Director	Todd Quick
Music Director	Janell Johnson
Technical Director	Doug Rankin
Choreographer	Vanessa Campagna
Dance Captains	Reese Hill, John Henderson
Stage Manager	Emma Wohlstadter
Assistant Stage Managers	Bekkah Gebe, Molly White
Scenic and Lighting Designer	Doug Rankin
Assistant Scenic Designer	Grace Cornelius
Costume Designer	Vanessa Campagna
Dramaturg	Bekkah Gebe
Box Office Staff	Meghan Bird, Catie Bozarth Brooke McCormick, Diamond Rideout
Poster Illustration and Design	Grace Cornelius
Run Crew	Kyle Breckenridge, CJ Daniel, Declan Flynn, Ashleigh Franciscovich, Addison Gilstrap, Ganon Greenman, Ashley Grothaus, Nicole Koppers, Sam Koppers, Conor McCormick, Carter Russell, TJ Schroeder, Matt Shimko, Skylar Shumaker, Brandon Spence, Owen Wolfe

## MEET THE ACTORS



**ALLIE BRYAN** is a senior Theatre major from Abingdon, Ill. Previous Monmouth College credits include Charlotte Corday in *The Revolutionists*, Beth in *Little Women*, Dead Body in *The Real Inspector Hound*, Bet in *Oliver!*, Brenda in *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, #11 in *The Wolves*, and Villian in *Almost, Maine*. Other Monmouth College activities include singing with the Chorale. Allie would like to thank their parents for attending the performance and Todd for letting them be a part of the experience.



**ANDREW CLIFFEL** is a junior theater and music major from Lakewood, Ohio. Previous Monmouth College credits include John Brook in *Little Women*, Doug in *Gruesome Playground Injuries*, Dwight in *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, Major Magnus in *The Real Inspector Hound*, and Postman/Constable in *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. Other Monmouth College activities include Chorale and Chamber Choir.



**KAITLYN FISHER** is a senior psychology and major from Monmouth. Previous Monmouth theatre credits include Milkmaid in *Oliver!*, Nellie in *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, Ejlif in *An Enemy of the People*, Kayleen in *Gruesome Playground Injuries*, and Rebecca in the U.S. premiere of *Black Mountain*. Other Monmouth College activities include Chorale and Chamber Choir.



**JOHN HENDERSON** is from Red Wing, Minn., and is a 1995 graduate of Cornell College with a B.A. in secondary education/theatre and communication studies. Previous Monmouth theatre credits include Bill Sikes in *Oliver!*, Father in *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, Peter Stockmann in *An Enemy of the People*, Father in *FusionFest*, and Bob Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol*. Other activities include Monmouth College Concert Choir, Buchanan Center for the Arts board member, working at Wordsmith Bookshoppe, and knitting. John would like to thank his wife, Sarah, and their kitties, Grace and Jonesy, for helping him run lines and putting up with his singing every day.



**REESE HILL** is a freshman theatre education major from Kansas City, Mo. Previous Monmouth theatre credits include The Ghost of Christmas Present in *A Christmas Carol* and *Fusion Fest VIII*. Other Monmouth College activities include Scot Ambassadors, Stockdale Fellows, art, music, and speech tutoring. Reese would like to thank her mom and sister for their unconditional love and support, especially this past year.



**BEKKAH GEBE** is a senior history major from Sandwich, Ill. Previous Monmouth theatre credits include stage manager for *Oliver!*, *A Child's Christmas in Wales*, *The Real Inspector Hound* and *Black Mountain*; assistant stage manager for *The Revolutionists* and *The Spoon River Project*; and dramaturg for *Little Women*, *The Revolutionists* and *The Spoon River Project*. Gebe's acting credits include Sandrine in *Almost, Maine* and Annie Moffat/Ensemble in *Little Women*. Other Monmouth College activities include playing in the jazz band.

## MEET THE ACTORS – *continued*



**ELIJAH LIND** is a junior economics major and mathematics minor from Walnut, Ill. Previous Monmouth College theatre credits include Paul in the U.S. premiere of *Black Mountain* and Rodrick in *Little Women*. The three-term president of his Sigma Phi Epsilon chapter, he was recently named a regional winner of the fraternity's prestigious Ruck Leadership Award. He is also active with the Monmouth Chorale and Chamber Choir, and performed a solo on the Chorale's 2020 trip to Europe.



**CELESTE "ZESTY" LYTHGOE** is a sophomore history education major from Lafayette, Colo. Previous Monmouth theatre credits include Marie Antoinette in *The Revolutionists*, Mrs. Stockmann in *An Enemy of the People* and an Ensemble member in *Little Women*. Other Monmouth College activities include the Honors Program and being a Dean's Scholar. Celeste would like to thank Todd for all the work he has done and all the joy and learning he has encouraged during his time at Monmouth College.



**GABRIELA "GABBAY" MADU** is a junior computer science and theatre double major from Montego Bay, Jamaica. Previous Monmouth theatre credits include Marianne Angell in *The Revolutionists*, Moon in *The Real Inspector Hound*, Meg in *Little Women*, Hermia in *Dead Man's Cell Phone* and Aunt Eleri in *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. She has also stage managed and assistant directed for *Grotesque Playground Injuries*, assistant directed and sound designed for *Black Mountain*, and sound designed for *Dead Man's Cell Phone*. Other Monmouth College activities include Residential Life, CVOP, International Club, Chorale, Chamber Choir and Scots Student Senate. She would like to thank her professors and family for pushing her to achieve her full potential and the friends who have supported her throughout her college career.



**CULLEN MARSHALL** is a senior biology major with minors in business administration and educational studies from Kewanee, Ill. Previous Monmouth theatre credits include Hovstad in *An Enemy of the People*, Doug in *Grotesque Playground Injuries* and Braxton in *Little Women*. He is also involved in Sigma Phi Epsilon, Interfraternity Council and Mortar Board.



**XAVION YORK** is a freshman health science and human development major from Trinidad and Tobago. Other Monmouth activities include cross country and track and field. Xavion would like to thank Gabbay for guiding him in acting and Todd for giving him the opportunity to do it.

# A classic born of controversy

*Spoon River Anthology* is a widely celebrated piece of literature, but that was not always the case. Edgar Lee Masters originally published his work as a serial installment in the St. Louis literary magazine *Reedy's Mirror*, over the course of 21 weeks under the pseudonym Webster Ford. In 1915, the Macmillan Company decided to publish Masters' work as an anthology. That work received mixed reviews—Carl Sandburg, for example, loved it, while the people of Lewiston, Ill., the thinly-veiled setting for the town of Spoon River, detested it.



MASTERS

A series of epitaphs based on the townspeople of Lewiston and Petersburg, Illinois, *Spoon River Anthology* stirred controversy by airing the dirty laundry of the community. The series of poems told of affairs, murders, crimes and more, and even though Masters changed names and took some creative liberty, there was no mystery as to who these people were in the community of Lewiston.

*Spoon River Anthology* sparked such anger that the Lewiston school district and library banned the book until 1974. In the years since, however, the community has softened its stance and in 2015 even celebrated the 100-year anniversary of the work, which has now become a staple of Illinois literature and culture.

Masters preserved what life was like for a small rural Illinois community in the late nineteenth century—even the less-savory details. He wrote about issues of patriarchy and religion in the community. He chronicled the lives of laborers and the influence of corrupt politics. But he also captured the human spirit and celebrated those who lived life to the fullest.

*Spoon River Project* translates the idea of the triumph of the human spirit by bringing characters together to bare their souls to one another. They seek forgiveness or solace in sharing their stories and urge the audience to do the same. Playwright Tom Andolora did Masters' work justice by preserving his words and making late nineteenth-century Illinois come to life.

—BEKKAH GEBE

The Kennedy Center

**AMERICAN  
COLLEGE  
THEATER  
FESTIVAL**

**This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF).** The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students

and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year, more than 1,300 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide.

By entering this production, our Theatre Department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theatres across the nation.

Monmouth College is a member of KCACTF's Region 3.

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