

http://www.centraljersey.com/time_off/sally-struthers-has-a-clue-at-bucks-county-playhouse/article_8c16fe42-31b1-11e7-bf28-0bf2801fc599.html



May 6, 2017

Sally Struthers has a 'Clue' at Bucks County Playhouse



Sally Struthers is playing Miss Peacock in “Clue”, a new musical based on the board game and movie, at Bucks County Playhouse.

By Keith Loria

With two Emmys to her name and roles on two of Time magazine’s Top 100 TV shows of all time (“All in the Family” and “Gilmore Girls”) Sally Struthers is an actress people of all generations seem to know.

“People used to say to me after ‘All in the Family’ was finished, ‘You got the brass ring and that doesn’t happen in many people’s careers, and you’re very young but probably the rest of your career will be downhill,’” Struthers says. “But then ‘Gilmore Girls’ came along and I feel like I got the brass ring again because that writing was superb.”

In addition to her notable roles as Gloria and Babette in the aforementioned shows, Struthers has achieved a long list of acting credits in TV and theater throughout her more than 47-year career, including everything from "General Hospital" to Marc Maron's show on IFC, to doing voice over work for "The Pebbles and Bamm-Bamm Show."

This month, the veteran actress stars as Mrs. Peacock in the world premiere of "Clue: On Stage" playing at the Bucks County Playhouse through May 20.

Based on the classic board game and the 1985 movie, "Clue" is a comedy whodunit that aims to keep audiences guessing, and laughing. The story revolves around the death of Mr. Boddy, who on a dark and stormy night, is murdered by one of six colorful characters who are attending a dinner party at his home.

"All of the board players are covered in the show," Struthers says. "Early in the show, Mr. Boddy gives each of us a gift and inside is a weapon, and they're the standard ones from the game. There are nine rooms on the stage and it's just controlled mayhem."

"Clue: On Stage" is based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn with additional material by Eric Price and Hunter Foster. Foster, who often directs at the Playhouse, has a long history with Struthers.

"About 23 years ago I was cast in the national tour of the Broadway musical, 'Grease,' and was working with a whole bunch of young people — all of them in their younger 20s," Struthers says. "I was out with them for three years and that experience bonded all of us in a way that I had never bonded with a large group before. All of those kids called me 'Mom' — I was Mother Struthers to all of them. Hunter Foster and Jenn Cody married not long after the production and I've stayed in touch with them all these years." Foster contacted Struthers last year to tell her he was doing a workshop of "Clue" and that he wanted her to be a part of it.

"I had played the board game my whole childhood with my sister Sue and my cousins John and Betsy, so I know the game really well," she says. "He asked if I had seen the movie, but I hadn't, so he sent me a script. To tell you the truth, I didn't like it. It wasn't funny and it didn't grab me."

Foster assured Struthers the script was going through a rewrite and would be funny, and she trusted him and accepted the part.

"On April 2, I showed up in New York and we had three weeks of rehearsal and when we all read it around the table the first day, it had changed dramatically for the better," she says. "It was hilarious and it got more so as we rehearsed it. Now, I'm very excited I am in it because I think it's going places." The show also stars Erin Dilly as Mrs. White, Kevin Carolan as Colonel Mustard, Brian J. Carter as Mr. Green, Clifton Duncan as Professor Plum, Lindsay Nicole Chambers as Miss Scarlet, Carson Elrod as Wadsworth and Claire Simba as Yvette. The cast also includes Cassandra Dupler and William Youmans playing multiple roles.

"There's not a rotten apple in this barrel and I can't say that for all the productions I've done in my life," Struthers says. "This group is all sweethearts and we're very supportive of one another."

The set was designed by multiple Tony-nominated set designer Anna Louizos, and it's the biggest, heaviest and most expensive set that's ever been put on the Bucks County stage.

"It's formidable. It's its own character," Struthers says. "And we go into all nine rooms through a series of screens that slide in and slide out. For the most part, we move around the stage in a clump, taking the same amount of steps at the same time, turning our heads at the same time, gasping at the same time, it's just fascinating."

Struthers says she's having a blast with the show and is so happy to be a part of it. She believes that "Clue" will be a big hit and will connect with people of all ages.

"Most all of us of a certain age have played the game Clue, or saw the movie, so I think there's an interest built into that," she says. "The show's a lot of fun and I'm sure audiences are going to have a good time watching their favorite Clue characters come to life."

"Clue" continues at Bucks County Playhouse, 70 S. Main St., New Hope, Pennsylvania, through May 20. Tickets cost \$40-\$75; buckscountyplayhouse.org; 215-862-2121.