

lifeline



T H E A T R E

Big Stories, Up Close

STRONG POISON

BASED ON THE BOOKS BY
DOROTHY L. SAYERS

ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY
FRANCES LIMONCELLI



Strong Poison

BY **DOROTHY L. SAYERS**

ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY **FRANCES LIMONCELLI***

Stage Manager & Production Coordinator
Adi Davis

THE CAST

Lord Peter Wimsey **Peter Greenberg***

Party Guest, Inspector Parker, Jury Foreman, **Robert Kauzlaric***
Ryland Vaughn, Mr. Pond, Lord at Party

Gerald Wimsey, Sir Impey Biggs, Freddy Arbuthnot, **Paul S. Holmquist**
Bohemian, Norman Urquhart

Judge, Guard, Bunter, Vanya Kropotky, Lady at Party **Patrick Blashill***

Party Guest, the Dowager Duchess of Denver, **Jan Sodaro**
Eiluned Price, Nurse Booth Harriet

Vane, Bohemian, Hannah Westlock **Jenifer Tyler***

Helen Wimsey, Miss Climpson, Nina Kropotky, **Sandy Snyder***
Mrs. Pettican

Party Guest, Lady Mary Wimsey, Marjorie Phelps, **Elise Kauzlaric***
Miss Murchison

**Denotes Lifeline Theatre Artistic Ensemble Member*

Cast & Creative Team



Dorothy L. Sayers (Author of *Strong Poison*) (1893–1957) was a renowned English writer, best known for her detective novels featuring Lord Peter Wimsey. Born in Oxford, she excelled academically, graduating from Somerville College, Oxford, with honors in modern languages. In 1923, she published *Whose Body?*, the first in her Lord Peter series, establishing herself as a leading figure in crime fiction. Beyond detective stories, Sayers was a respected playwright and theologian, known for works like *The Man Born to be King*, and her widely praised translation of *Dante's Divine Comedy*. She was a prolific writer whose contributions spanned fiction, theology, and translation, leaving a lasting impact on 20th-century literature. Sayers' intellectual range extended beyond crime writing. Her essays and books on Christian theology, like *The Mind of the Maker*, explored the creative process and the nature of God. Her versatility and scholarly rigor made her a towering figure not only in literature but also in religious and academic circles.



Frances Limoncelli (Adaptor and Director) has been a member of Lifeline's artistic ensemble since 1995. As an adaptor she created *Mrs. Caliban* (Non-Equity Jeff nomination: New Adaptation), as well as the popular Dorothy L. Sayers series: *Whose Body?*, *Strong Poison* (Non-Equity Jeff Award: New Adaptation), *Gaudy Night* (Non-Equity Jeff Award: New Adaptation), and *Busman's Honeymoon* (Non-Equity Jeff Award: New Adaptation), all for Lifeline's MainStage. For Lifeline's KidSeries she created *The Emperor's Groovy New Clothes*; *Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch*; and *Arnie the Doughnut* with composer/lyricist George Howe, which was a Next Link Selection in the 2012 NY Musical Theatre Festival. Her plays have been seen in such regional theatres as the Cleveland Playhouse in Ohio, the PTC Performance Space in New York, Taproot Theatre in Seattle, and the Manitoba Theatre Center in Winnipeg. At Lifeline, Frances directed *Simple Jim And His Four Fabulous Friends*, *The Story Of Ferdinand*, *Miss Bianca*, *Half Magic*, *Cooking with Lard*, and the new musical *Queen Lucia*.

Peter Greenberg (Lord Peter Wimsey) has appeared on the Lifeline stage in *Jane Eyre* (2001), *Around the World in 80 Days*, *The Talisman Ring* (1996 and 2005), *The Moonstone*, *Mrs. Caliban*, *Busman's Honeymoon*, *Gaudy Night*, *Strong Poison*, *Hunger*, *Trust Me On This*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Whose Body?*, *Pistols for Two*, *Cotillion*, *Miss Buncle's Book*, and *Northanger Abbey*. Also at Lifeline he adapted the play *Talking It Over* from the novel and directed the 2004 production of *Bunnacula*. Other Chicago acting credits include *The Beaux' Stratagem* with Powertap; *The Heidi Chronicles* at New American Theater in Rockford; *Thank You, Jeeves* with City Lit; and *The Sweat Offensive* with the Sweat Girls. Regionally, Peter has performed the works of Shakespeare, Moliere, Middleton, Chekhov, Dickens, Sam Shepard and Neil Simon in Boise, St Petersburg, Sacramento, Boston, Atlanta, and New York City. In 1988 Peter helped to found the Actors Shakespeare Company in Albany, New York. For seven years he acted in or directed every one of its 23 productions and served as Co-Artistic Director.

Robert Kauzlaric (Party Guest, Inspector Parker, Jury Foreman, Ryland Vaughn, Mr. Pond, Lord at Party) started working with Lifeline in 2000 and joined the artistic ensemble in 2005. He has appeared onstage in 16 Lifeline productions, including *The Return of the King*, *Around the World in 80 Days* (Non-Equity Jeff Awards: Supporting Actor-Play and Ensemble), *The Killer Angels* (2004), *Strong Poison*, *The Talisman Ring* (2005), and *Monstrous Regiment*. At Lifeline, Robert also directed *Treasure Island* and *Hunger* and adapted 17 productions, including *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (Non-Equity Jeff Awards: Production-Play and New Adaptation), *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!* (with Paul Gilvary & William Rush), *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Neverwhere* (Non-Equity Jeff Award: New Adaptation), *Lions in Illyria*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins* (with George Howe), and *Northanger Abbey* (with George Howe; Non-Equity Jeff Award: New Musical). Other area acting credits include *Mojo Mickybo*, *War*, and *A Whistle in the Dark* with Irish Theatre of Chicago (where he is also an ensemble member); King Richard in *Richard II* and Brutus in *Julius Caesar* at the Michigan Shakespeare Festival (where he is an artistic associate) and productions with Strawdog Theatre Co., the Hypocrites, Goodman Theatre, City Lit, Circle Theatre, New American Theater, Theatre at the Center, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, and Lakeside Shakespeare. Regional directing credits include the world premiere of *The White Road* for Irish Theatre of Chicago (Jeff nomination: Production-Play, Midsize); *Cymbeline* for Strawdog Theatre (Non-Equity Jeff nomination: Director-Play); and *Tartuffe* (Wilde Award: Best Comedy), *Love's Labour's Lost* (Wilde Award: Best of the Bard), *Cymbeline* (Wilde Award: Best of the Bard), *As You Like It* (Wilde Award: Best of the Bard), and *The Tempest* for the Michigan Shakespeare Festival.

Paul S. Holmquist (Gerald Wimsey, Sir Impey Biggs, Freddy Arbuthnot, Bohemian, Norman Urquhart) served on the Lifeline Ensemble 2006-2024. He has directed the KidSeries shows *Rikki Tikki Tavi*, *Flight of the Dodo*, *Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed*, *The Mystery of the Pirate Ghost*, and *Mr. Popper's Penguins*; and the MainStage productions of *Miss Holmes*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, *Busman's Honeymoon*, *Neverwhere*, *The Moonstone*, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, and *Soon I Will Be Invincible*. Paul holds a BFA in Acting from the Theatre School at DePaul University.

Patrick Blashill (Judge, Guard, Bunter, Vanya Kropotky, Lady at Party) is an ensemble member since 1994 and has been in 30+ productions over the years. Some favorites include *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy* (Bilbo and Frodo), *Neverwhere* (Old Bailey), *Piano Tuner* (Edgar/After Dark award), *Pistols for Two* (Tom), and *Midnight Cowboy* (Towny). Chicago credits include *Choir Boy* (Steppenwolf- U/S) *Much Ado about Nothing* (Oak Park Festival Theatre), *Long Days Journey into Night* (Eclipse Theatre), *The Harvest*, *Journey's End* (Griffin Theatre), *May the Road Rise Up*, *The Kelly Girls* (Factory Theatre), *The God of Isaac* (Victory Gardens), *Eurydice* (Filament Theatre), *Emma* (Reverie Theatre). Films include *Visiting Friends*, *The Dancing Monkey*. TV appearances include *Chicago PD*, *Chicago Fire*, *Empire*. Patrick is represented by Gray Talent Group.

Jan Sodaro (Party Guest, the Dowager Duchess of Denver, Eiluned Price, Nurse Booth Harriet) is so thrilled to be a part of this presentation of *Strong Poison*. She has appeared in several productions at Lifeline including the original *Strong Poison*, *Gaudy Night*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Queen Lucia*. Jan has also worked at Victory Gardens, Theo Ubique and Akvavit Theatre among others.

Jenifer Tyler (Vane, Bohemian, Hannah Westlock) has been a Lifeline ensemble member since 2001. She has been delighted to appear as Harriet Vane in the Dorothy Sayers' mysteries *Strong Poison* (2004), *Gaudy Night* (2006), and *Busman's Honeymoon* (2009). Other Lifeline credits include: Mina in *Dracula*; Lydia in *Pride and Prejudice*; Kitty in *Cotillion*; Jane in *Jane Eyre* (Non-Equity Joseph Jefferson Award: Outstanding Actress in a Principal Role); Ida/Phyllis in *Trust me on This*; Bathsheba in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, and Estelle in *Mrs. Caliban*. For Lifeline, she also directed the KidSeries production of *The Velveteen Rabbit*. Jenifer has been seen around Chicago with greasy joan & co., and in many Touchstone/Organic productions including *Into the Woods*, *The Seagull*, and *Hedda Gabler*. Jenifer is also a "Sweat Girl;" her credits as writer and performer include *I'm Sweating Under My Breasts*, *Sweat Dreams*, *I Just Oops Until I Wow*, (The Sweat Girls) *Pigs at the Trough of Attention*, and *The Motherlode*.

Sandy Snyder (Helen Wimsey, Miss Climpson, Nina Kropotky, Mrs. Pettican), a graduate of Northwestern University, is a founding member of Lifeline. She performed in Lifeline's very first production of *Split*. Over the past thirty years, some of her favorite roles have been in *Strong Poison* (Non-Equity Jeff Nomination: Best Supporting Actress – Play), *A Room with a View*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Jane Eyre*, *Lizard Music* and *A Wrinkle in Time*. KidSeries roles include *Somebody Loves You*, *Mr. Hatch* and *Giggle Giggle Quack*. Sandy has also directed *My Father's Dragon*, *Bunnicula*, and *Stuart Little*. As a co-founder of Lifeline's educational outreach program, she served as program coordinator and teaching artist for many years. Sandy is now a drama specialist in Evanston/Skokie School District 65.

Elise Kauzlaric (Party Guest, Lady Mary Wimsey, Marjorie Phelps, Miss Murchison) has worked with Lifeline for many years and has been a member of the ensemble since 2005. She directed Lifeline's MainStage productions of *Northanger Abbey* (Non-Equity Jeff Nomination: Director-Musical), *One Came Home*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *The Woman in White*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Mariette in Ecstasy* (Non-Equity Jeff Nomination: Director-Play), and KidSeries productions of *Arnie the Doughnut* and *The Emperor's Groovy New Clothes*. She has appeared in the Lifeline MainStage productions of *Miss Buncler's Book*, *Neverwhere*, *Talking It Over*, *Queen Lucia*, *The Sirens of Titan*, *Strong Poison*, and *The Silver Chair*, as well as the KidSeries productions of *Hen Lake*, *Mrs. Piggle Wiggle*, and *My Father's Dragon*. Other Lifeline credits include her adaptations of *Half Magic* and *The Velveteen Rabbit*, and dialect coaching for numerous productions, including *The Mark of Zorro*, *The Piano Tuner*, *The Killer Angels*, and *Busman's Honeymoon* (Non-Equity Jeff Nomination: Artistic Specialization). Other area acting credits include *King Lear* (Goodman Theatre, directed by Robert Falls), *Tartuffe* and *The Importance of Being Ernest* (City Lit), *Nine* (Circle Theatre), *Cabaret* and *A Christmas Carol* (Metropolis), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (First Folio Shakespeare), and *On the Shore of the Wide World* (Griffin Theatre, Non-Equity Jeff Nomination: Supporting Actress). Elise is a graduate of The Webster Conservatory of Theatre Arts with a BFA in Musical Theatre and received her MA with Distinction in Actor Training at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, London. She is also a member of the adjunct faculty of The Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University.

Addoris Davis (Stage Manager and Production Manager) is the production manager for Lifeline Theatre and The Florentine Opera Company. Chicago credits include production management for *The Jigsaw Bride* (First Folio Theatre), *The Secret Council* (First Folio Theatre), *Jeeves Intervenes* (First Folio Theatre), *Little Women* (First Folio Theatre), *Neither Have I Wings To Fly* (First Folio Theatre), *Anna in the Tropics* (Remy Bumppo Theatre Company [co-production manager]), *Galileo's Daughter* (Remy Bumppo Theatre Company), and Lifeline Theatre's *From the Mississippi Delta*. Originally from Alaska, they have worked as a stage manager for Cyrano's Theatre Company, Anchorage Community Theatre, Alaska Fine Arts Academy, Pier One Theatre, and the University of Alaska.

LIFELINE THEATRE ARTISTIC ENSEMBLE

Aly Amidei	Alan Donahue	John Hildreth	Shole Milos
Shelby Bias	Ilesa Duncan	Elise Kauzlaric	Suzanne Plunkett
Patrick Blashill	Andrés Enriquez	Robert Kauzlaric	Maren Robinson
Jessica Wright Buha	Diane Fairchild	Anthony Kayer	Sandy Snyder
Christina Calvit	Kevin Gawley	Frances Limoncelli	Phil Timberlake
Heather Currie	Peter Greenberg	Amanda Link	Jenifer Tyler
Bilal Dardai	James Grote	Martel Manning	Chris Vizurraga
Amanda Delheimer	Katie McLean Hainsworth	Dorothy Milne	Christopher Walsh

ENSMEBLE EMERITUS

Eric Lane Barnes, Meryl Friedman, Rebecca Hamlin,
James Sie, Kathee Sills, Steve Totland, and Elizabeth Wislar

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Neil Sondgeroth, Chair
Mark Greenberg, Treasurer
Loreli Fritz Cohn, Secretary

Ilesa Duncan	Katie McNally
Krystine Hansen	Dorothy Milne
Dr. Valorie DaCosta	Joseph Park
Johnson	Elizabeth Rupp
Anthony Kayer	Roche Schulfer
	Betsy Vandercook

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Jay D. Lenn	Linda Jacobson
Ann Ziegler	Mark Gluskin
Beatriz G. Reyes	Nancy "Sessy" Nyman
Becky Tinkham	Patricia (Pat) Kelley
Brian Swierczek	Peter Calibraro
Cynthia Hunt Rudolph	Raymond (Randy) Snyder
Dan Sullivan	Raymond R. Snyder (In Memoriam)
Donna Mavros	Rebecca Tinkham
Jackie Snyder (In Memoriam)	Steven Wise
Jessie Bylander	Susan Rosenberg (In Memoriam)
John Tolley	Tyrone "Tye" Clark

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Artistic Director Ilesa Duncan
Managing Director Elizabeth Rupp
Communications Manager Victoria Andrus
Operations Manager John Craig
Production Manager Adi Davis
Casting Director Andrés Enriquez
Bookkeeper Kelly Nespor
Technical Director Harrison Ornelas
Education Director Merissa Stewart
Publicists The Silverman Group, Inc.
Front of House Lead Carly Davis
Front of House Associates Garvin van Dernoot, Joshua Hoover, Paula
Ann Lopez, Jenna Merrill, and Erika Rivard

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