

The PROMPTER

WESTPORT COMMUNITY THEATRE

APR 2019

PICASSO AT THE LAPIN AGILE • AUDITIONS: DIAL M FOR MURDER



Picasso (Emily Vrissis) and Einstein (Jessica Grabarz) brainstorm

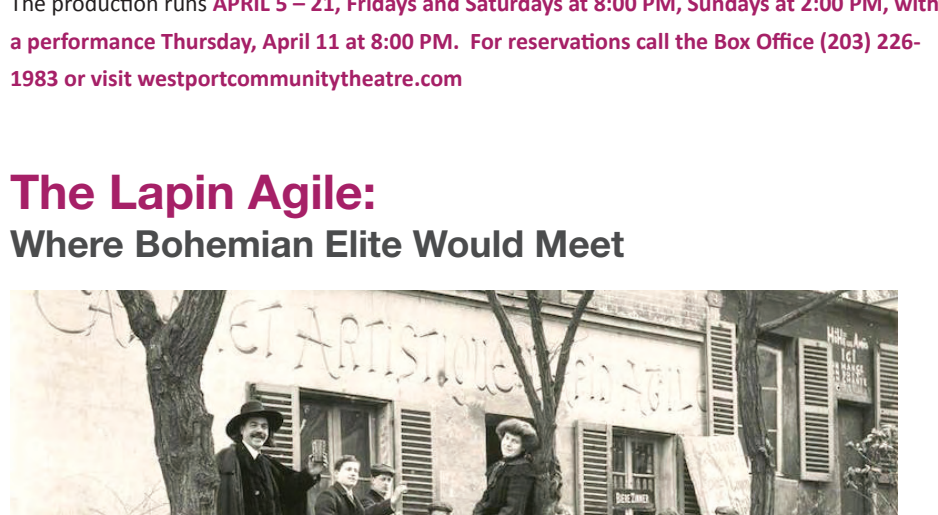
Picasso at the Lapin Agile: Steve Martin's Smart, Wacky Comedy Opens April 5

In a Paris cafe in 1904 Albert Einstein encounters Pablo Picasso. Neither man has achieved greatness yet. The scientist is about to transform physics with his theory of relativity, and the celebrated painter is about to set the art world afire with cubism. The two meet, and ideas (and the Modern Age) explode. In his first comedy for the stage, comedic actor and screenwriter Steve Martin plays fast and loose with fact, fame, and fortune as these two geniuses muse on the century's achievements and prospects, as well as other fanciful topics, with infectious dizziness. Bystanders include Picasso's agent, the bartender and his mistress, Picasso's date, an elderly philosopher, Charles Dabernow Schmendiman, an idiot inventor, and a charismatic singer (with a penchant for blue suede shoes) warped in from a later era.



Jessica Grabarz and Betzabeth Castro

Picasso at the Lapin Agile was first produced in Chicago in 1993 by the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and had its Broadway premiere in 1995, warmly received by audiences and critics. *The New York Times* says of ...*Lapin Agile*: "Martin sends ideas onstage in baggy pants, with a cigar ... mix[ing] the sublime with the ridiculous [so] that they can't be easily disentangled... Very good fun." *Variety* says "There are plenty of laughs, a little romance, a little nostalgia, and it makes the audience feel smart. Nice trick."

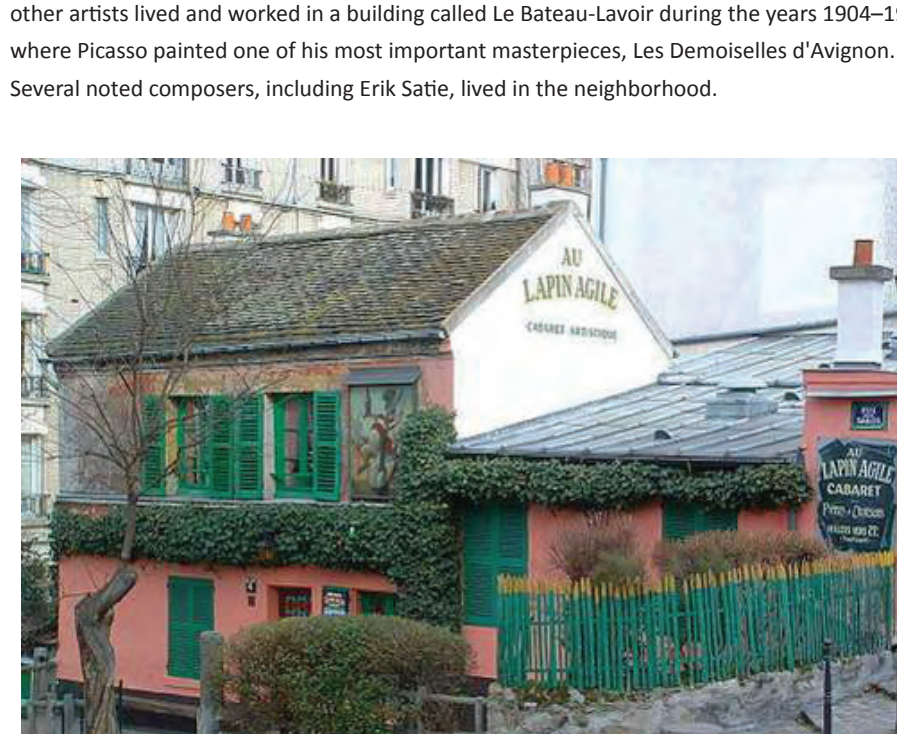


Sophie Tiesler and Emily Vrissis

Directed by Mat Young, the cast includes Kathryn Alane, Ari Benmosche, Betzabeth Castro, Patrick Duffy, Jessica Grabarz, Amy Kozumplik Kirby, Andrew Kirby, John R. Smith Jnr, Sophie Tiesler, and Emily Vrissis. The play is produced by Sam Mink; Stage Manager: Samantha Tonan; Assistant Stage Manager: Christina Tiernan-Tiska. Lighting and Sound design: David Rylander; Set design: Kevin Pelkey.

The production runs **APRIL 5 – 21, Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 PM, Sundays at 2:00 PM, with a performance Thursday, April 11 at 8:00 PM. For reservations call the Box Office (203) 226-1983 or visit westportcommunitytheatre.com**

The Lapin Agile: Where Bohemian Elite Would Meet



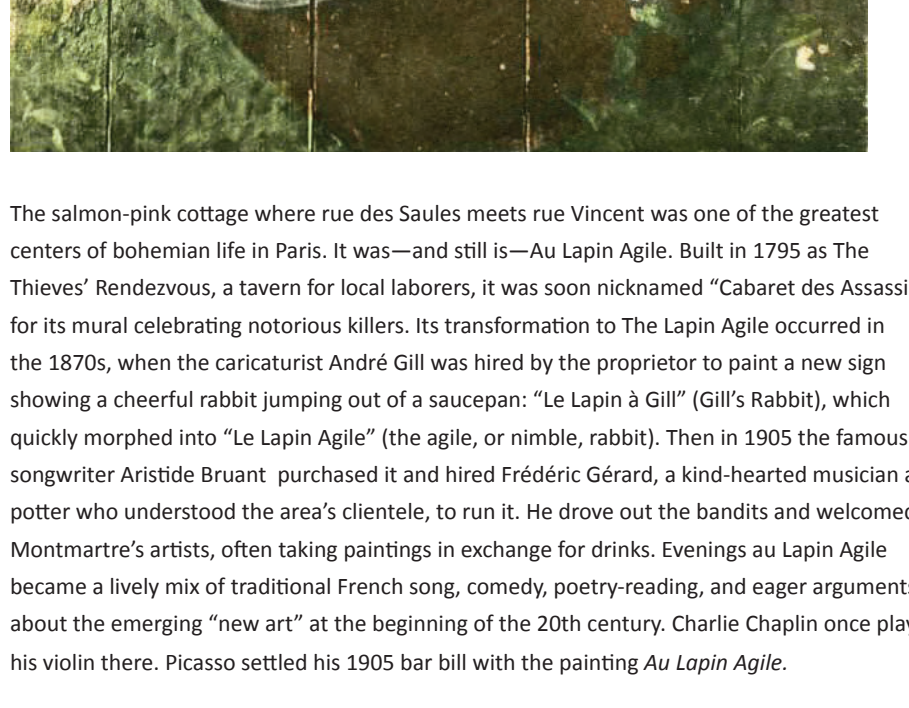
Bon vivants outside the Lapin Agile, Paris, in 1904

WCT Welcomes You to Montmartre and Le Lapin Agile!

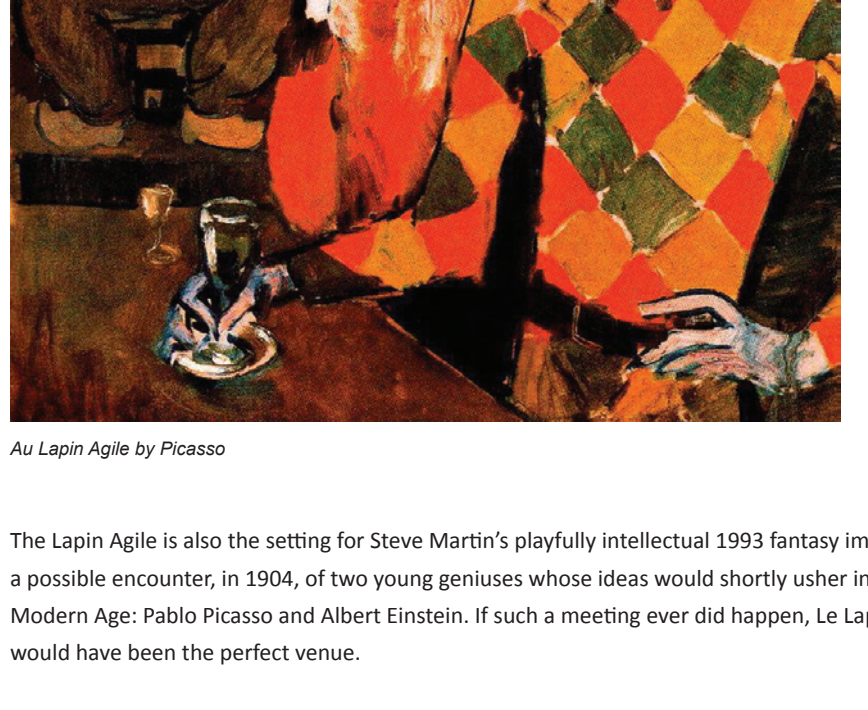
As you enjoy Steve Martin's fantasy of a meeting between Picasso and Einstein at the brink of their fame and influence, you might enjoy knowing what artistic and intellectual ferment was swirling around them. And so The Prompter offers this quick tour of Montmartre and The Lapin Agile, which is still in operation.

Montmartre is the highest part of Paris, a large hill occupied since the second century or earlier (as attested to by ancient texts and archaeological remains) that has retained its separate-village atmosphere despite the development and spread of the modern city around it. It is best known for its artists, the Basilica of the Sacré-Coeur, the small vineyards (one still in operation) constructed to obstruct urban development, and its varied and venerable nightclubs and cafes.

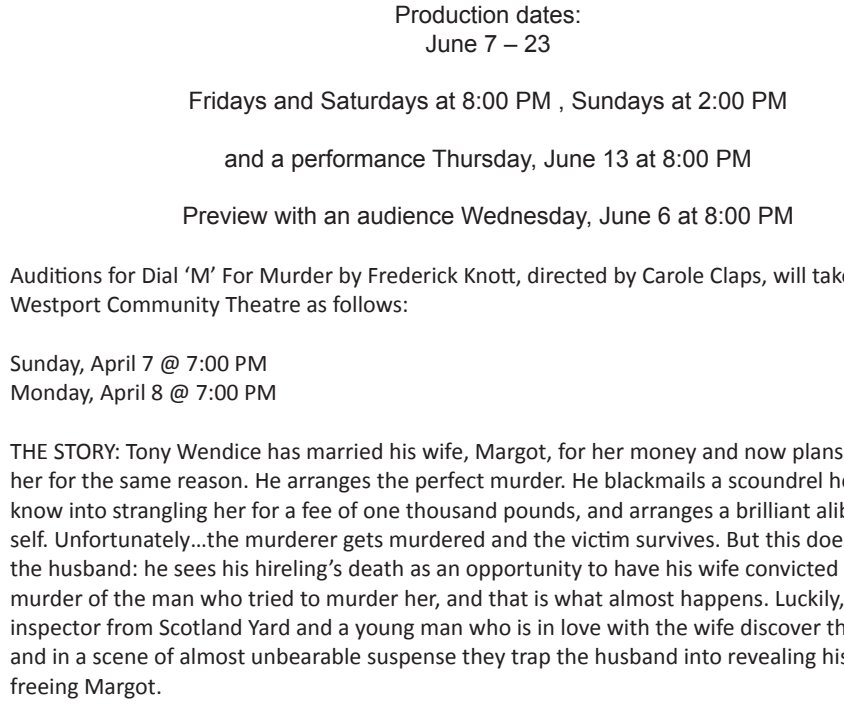
During the Belle Époque (from 1872 to 1914), many notable artists lived and worked in Montmartre, where the rents were low and the atmosphere congenial. Pierre-Auguste Renoir rented space at 12 rue Cortot in 1876 to paint *Bal du moulin de la Galette*, showing a dance at Montmartre on a Sunday afternoon; Maurice Utrillo, who did a series of paintings of the Lapin Agile, lived at the same address from 1906 to 1914, and Raoul Dufy shared an atelier there from 1901 to 1911. The building is now the Musée de Montmartre. Pablo Picasso, Amedeo Modigliani, and other artists lived and worked in a building called Le Bateau-Lavoir during the years 1904–1909, where Picasso painted one of his most important masterpieces, *Les Femmes d'Alger*. Several noted composers, including Erik Satie, lived in the neighborhood.



Vincent van Gogh, Pierre Brissaud, Alfred Jarry, Jacques Villon, Raymond Duchamp-Villon, Henri Matisse, André Derain, Suzanne Valadon, Edgar Degas, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Théophile Montmartre, an artistic salon called R-26 was frequented by Josephine Baker, Le Corbusier, and Django Reinhardt.



The salmon-pink cottage where rue des Saules meets rue Vincent was one of the greatest centers of bohemian life in Paris. It was—and still is—Au Lapin Agile. Built in 1795 as The Thieves' Rendezvous, a tavern for local laborers, it was soon nicknamed "Cabaret des Assassins" for its mural celebrating notorious killers. Its transformation to The Lapin Agile occurred in the 1870s, when the caricaturist André Gill was hired by the proprietor to paint a new sign showing a cheerful rabbit jumping out of a saucepan: "Le Lapin à Gill" (Gill's Rabbit), which quickly morphed into "Le Lapin Agile" (the agile, or nimble, rabbit). Then in 1905 the famous songwriter Aristide Bruant purchased it and hired Frédéric Gérard, a kind-hearted musician and potter who understood the area's clientele, to run it. He drove out the bandits and welcomed Montmartre's artists, often taking paintings in exchange for drinks. Evenings at Lapin Agile became a lively mix of traditional French song, comedy, poetry-reading, and eager arguments about the emerging "new art" at the beginning of the 20th century. Charlie Chaplin once played his violin there. Picasso settled his 1905 bar bill with the painting *Au Lapin Agile*.



Au Lapin Agile by Picasso

The Lapin Agile is also the setting for Steve Martin's playfully intellectual 1993 fantasy imagining a possible encounter, in 1904, of two young geniuses whose ideas would shortly usher in the Modern Age: Pablo Picasso and Albert Einstein. If such a meeting ever did happen, Le Lapin Agile would have been the perfect venue.

And for the next three weekends you can come to Westport Community Theatre and see what Steve Martin and Mat Young have done with that agile rabbit!

—Ruth Anne Baumgartner

AUDITIONS DIAL M FOR MURDER

by Frederick Knott

Directed by Carole Claps

Audition dates:

Sunday, April 7, 7:00–9 PM

Monday, April 8, at 7:00– 9 PM

Production dates:
June 7 – 23

Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 PM , Sundays at 2:00 PM

and a performance Thursday, June 13 at 8:00 PM

Preview with an audience Wednesday, June 6 at 8:00 PM

Auditions for Dial "M" For Murder by Frederick Knott, directed by Carole Claps, will take place at Westport Community Theatre as follows:

Sunday, April 7 @ 7:00 PM

Monday, April 8 @ 7:00 PM

THE STORY: Tony Wendice has married his wife, Margot, for her money and now plans to murder her for the same reason. He arranges the perfect murder. He blackmails a scoundrel he used to know into strangling her for a fee of one thousand pounds, and arranges a brilliant alibi for himself. Unfortunately...the murderer gets murdered and the victim survives. But this doesn't baffle the husband: he sees his hiring's death as an opportunity to have his wife convicted for the murder of the man who tried to murder her, and that is in love with happens. Luckily, the police inspector from Scotland Yard and a young man who is in love with the wife discover the truth, and in a scene of almost unbearable suspense they trap the husband into revealing his guilt, thus freeing Margot.

This exciting melodrama had a highly successful run on Broadway and the road. "...original and remarkably good theatre—quiet in style but tingling with excitement underneath." —NY Times. "It's a holiday for the whodunit fans, and, as such, it couldn't be more welcome." —NY Herald-Tribune.

Auditions will consist of reading from the script; seeking the following:

Margot Wendice (late 20s-mid 30s): The charming, naïve, and wealthy wife of Tony, Margot has no idea that Tony knows of her past affair with Max, nor does she suspect that Tony is planning to murder her.

Max Halliday: (30s-50s) An American murder mystery writer, Max had an affair with Margot during the time Tony was playing professional tennis tournaments in America. He is still in love with Margot and comes to visit the couple in London.

Tony Wendice: (30s-50s) Margot's husband, Tony is a former professional tennis player who married Margot for her money. He is selfish and arrogant and has an elaborate scheme to murder Margot because of jealousy over a past affair between Margot and Max.

Captain Lesgate: (30s-50s) An old schoolmate of Tony's and a convicted criminal, Lesgate is now being blackmailed by Tony into murdering Margot. He seems willing to do anything for money.

Inspector Hubbard: (40s-up) A British Inspector of Police, Hubbard is a bit eccentric, but thoughtful and thorough.

Thompson: A police officer. (no age requirement)

Westport Community Theatre
Westport Town Hall – 110 Myrtle Avenue
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Email inquiries: info@westportcommunitytheatre.com

Memorial Service for Jeff Weglarz Announced



Friends of Jeff Weglarz are invited to a memorial service Friday, May 17, in Fairfield. Details will be announced as they become available.

An accomplished actor and videographer, Jeff appeared in several productions at WCT including *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Art*, and *Company*.

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