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For Immediate Release

Governors State University Theatre Closes Season with ‘12 Angry Jurors’, April 7–9

University Park, IL (March 31, 2022) – Governors State University (GSU) Theatre and Performance Studies’ (TAPS’) Spring 2022 production ‘12 Angry Jurors’ runs April 7–9 on the Center for Performing Arts’ (the Center’s) stage. Tickets are available at [CenterTickets.net](https://www.govst.edu/center/tickets).

Based on the 1950s film *12 Angry Men*, featuring a powerhouse of Hollywood giants (all white), GSU’s cast includes women and individuals of color. Beyond reflecting inclusivity, the casting raises important questions, such as “What does it mean to have a Black woman as Foreperson in charge of the jurors? Or to see Black men in the roles of protagonist and antagonist?”

Director Dr. Patrick Santoro, who also serves as Associate Professor and Artistic Director of GSU’s TAPS program says, “Although the film was written in the late 1950s, the play unfortunately has not lost its relevance. Our rendition, like the original, is intended to serve as a critique of the American justice system. The last two years, in particular, have cemented a hard, cold truth: Bodies are political, and not all bodies are created equal. Injustice and inequality are endemic in both our legal system and its rehabilitation efforts.”

While the production is grounded in realism, it is also stylized, merging past with present. Santoro adds, “While our production features a 1950s-specific set, the actors wear modern-day costumes. The intention is to raise questions: “Over the past 65 years, what has changed? What has stayed the same? Are things better or worse? In what ways? And for whom?”

The plot of ‘12 Angry Jurors’ covers the trial of 19-year-old man accused of fatally stabbing his father. It looks like an open-and-shut case—until Juror 8 begins opening the other jurors’ eyes to the facts. Throughout deliberations, each juror reveals his or her own background, biases, and prejudices. Tensions build as testimonies are re-examined and the murder is re-enacted.

'12 Angry Jurors' features a cast of 13, 11 of whom are GSU community members: nine students, one faculty and one staff. GSU English Professor Kerri K. Morris, who portrays Juror 4, shares, "I've had fun seeing the talent of all the cast, but I'm especially proud of the students (two of whom have been in my classes). I have so much to learn from them."

GSU freshman Xavier Thompson (Juror 5) praises the rehearsal process and direction, "The ensemble exercises have instilled in me and my fellow actors a sense of comradery and togetherness."

"The production is a group effort and requires a lot of team-building and trust between cast members," adds GSU graduate student Manuel Reza. "One of the greatest challenges of the production is portraying our characters in an honest, very human, way. It would be easy to present most of these characters as caricatures, but the nuance would be lost. Our job as actors is to create something both real and entertaining."

The Cast of *12 Angry Jurors*

Kimelia R. Carter as Foreperson

Manual Reza as Juror 2

Marquis Parks as Juror 3

Kerri K. Morris as Juror 4

Xavier Thompson as Juror 5

Eboni MaJoney Williams as Juror 6

Jazmin Butler as Juror 7

Darius Jackson as Juror 8

Lynne Clayton as Juror 9

David Niemeyer as Juror 10

Ellen Dillon as Juror 11

Dakota Keel as Juror 12

Ethan Moore-Walker as Guard

Tickets and Information

12 Angry Jurors runs Thursday, April 7, through Saturday, April 9, at 7:30 p.m. A post-show talkback and Q&A session with the director and cast will immediately follow the Friday, April 8, performance.

Tickets are \$15 (\$10 for students) and can be purchased at [CenterTickets.net](https://www.CenterTickets.net), at the Box Office, or by phone at 708.235.2222.

Box Office: 1 University Parkway, University Park, IL Hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Thursdays, and two hours prior to all performances.

To stay informed of TAPS audition announcements, upcoming productions, course information, and campus and community happenings, like their Facebook page (www.facebook.com/TAPSGSU) and follow on Instagram at [Instagram.com/TAPSGSU](https://www.instagram.com/TAPSGSU).

Know Before You Go

Your health and safety are our priority.

Face masks are required on campus for ages two (2) and up, even if not vaccinated. Hand sanitizer will be made readily available throughout the venue, and patrons are strongly encouraged to make use of them. If you are experiencing any of the symptoms of COVID-19, stay home and do not attend an event.

Center for Performing Arts' COVID-19 policies are mandated by Governors State University. For the most updated COVID-19 policies implemented across campus please visit: <https://www.govst.edu/coronavirus/>

Parking is free. For best GPS directions, use the location search term “Governors State University.”

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