



THE & SECRET GARDEN

Music and Lyrics by Marsha Norman

Music by Lucy Simon

Adapted from the novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett



Central Wyoming
College

www.cwc.edu/theatre

DIRECTOR NOTES

Directing this show has been a masterclass in what happens when “insane talent” meets “incredible material.” It’s been nothing short of magical. I’m deeply grateful to the CWC Theatre Department and the college administration for the opportunity to share this experience with our community; it’s a rare gift to have this kind of support. To the cast and crew: thank you for your patience when the nights were long, but especially for the enthusiasm that made them feel short. You’ve built a beautiful work of art, and I’m just lucky I had the best seat in the house.

*-- Annette Benn Thornton,
Guest Director*

Produced by special arrangement with Concord Theatricals.

There will be a 10 minute intermission.

CAST

Mary Lennox.....	Rhiannon Neale
Archibald Craven.....	Coulter Neale
Lily Craven.....	Arizona Davis
Dr. Neville Craven.....	Drew Thornton
Martha.....	Lily Draper
Dickon.....	Jeremy Swanton
Colin Craven.....	Micah McLaughlin
Ben Weatherstaff.....	Patrick Bergin
Captain Albert Lennox.....	Sam Tower
Rose Lennox.....	Molly Bergin
Mrs. Medlock.....	Jennifer Neely
Mrs. Winthrop.....	Dawn Bennett
Ayah.....	Madi Mahew
Fakir.....	Qwanell Davis
Major Holmes.....	Matt Hartman
Claire Holmes.....	Suzie Herrington
Lieutenant Wright.....	Madeline Dike
Alice.....	Krysten Winn
Lieutenant Shaw.....	David Susanka
Mrs. Shaw.....	Violet Cashe
Major Shelly.....	Tim Stong
Mrs. Shelly.....	Whitney Lester
Jane.....	Zoe Taylor
Youth Chorus.....	Ann Lillian Whitmore, Isa Vargas, Phoebe Susanka, Sapphyra Taylor, Zeke Neale

PRODUCTION TEAM

Guest Director.....	Annette Benn-Thornton
Musical Director.....	Coulter Neale
Musical Director.....	Kimber Tower
Production Manager.....	Alec Henderson
Costume Designer.....	Kara Hancock
Assistant Costume Manager.....	Zoe Taylor
Hair & Makeup.....	Lily Draper
Stage Manager.....	Kadie Crook
Choreography.....	Kadie Crook, Isabelle Tower
Set Design.....	Drew Thornton
Lighting Design.....	Colt Lawson
Sound Board Operator.....	Kenzie Harrison
Audio & Visual Operator.....	Alex Tower
Light Board Operator.....	Colt Lawson
Deck Managers.....	Zoe Taylor, Isabelle Tower
Dresser.....	Ana Vargas
Social Media.....	Kadie Crook, CWC Marketing & PR Department
Box Office.....	Matt Hartman
Scenery.....	Alec Henderson, Matt Hartman,

Drew Thornton, Jeremy Swanton, Dawn Bennett, Ana Vargas, Isa Vargas,

Aubry Ellis, Lucy Loveland, Shawne Royce

SYNOPSIS

Tending the “Wick”

In *The Secret Garden*, the greatest challenge isn't surviving tragedy – it is deciding to live afterward. When a life is stalled by grief, the most vital work is turning away from the shadows of the past to tend to the small, stubborn spark of what remains.

Our story begins with the shattered history Mary Lennox carries from India in the form of *The Dreamers*, the memories and experiences of her young life. Through a stylized children's game with a red handkerchief, we see the cholera that claimed Mary's world, leaving her as the sole survivor. Sent to the cold moors of Yorkshire to live with her uncle, Archibald Craven, Mary enters a world of strictly kept secrets. At Misselthwaite Manor, the halls are filled with forbidden rooms, unexplained cries in the night, and a garden that has been locked away for ten years.

Mary arrives as a “ghost” herself – sour, silent, and as frozen as the winter ground. Her transformation begins only when the reality of the moors demands her attention. Through the bracing fresh air and the “earth” wisdom of those she meets, she is pulled out of her isolation and into the soil. There, she discovers the “wick”, the tiny, green streak of life hidden under the bark of a winter branch. This “wick” is the proof she needs: even when a heart appears dead, the potential for growth is still there, waiting to be called forth.

As Mary works to bring the garden back to life, she is guided by the lingering spirit of her aunt, Lily. While Lily's memory haunts the grieving Archibald, her influence inspires Mary to believe that restoration is possible. By uncovering the manor's secrets and getting her hands dirty, Mary learns that where you tend a rose, a thistle cannot grow. We invite you into the garden to see if, by choosing to tend the “wick,” a broken family can finally find its way back to one another.

MEET THE CAST



Rhiannon Neale

Mary Lennox

Rhiannon has been a part of six shows at CWC and participated in the Holiday Spectacular twice! She has performed in The Sound of Music, Peter Pan, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolored Dreamcoat, Bright Star, Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, and a Groovy Christmas Carol at CWC! She would like to thank her parents for taking her to rehearsal and helping her with lines, the Director, and all her friends for being supportive.

“My character, Mary Lennox, has helped me to understand that even when everything seems terrible and sad, or everyone seems annoying, sometimes you just have to look deeper and find things are better than they seem at first.”

Coulter has been a part of around 25 theatrical productions throughout his theatre career! He would like to thank his wife, Rykki Neale, for supporting their family in all of their theatrical adventures.

“This show means a lot to me. I fell in love with the music when I got to sing ‘Lily’s Eyes’ in college. The Secret Garden has so much depth and richness. We each have to learn how to grow through the most painful moments in our lives and this story is such a great representation of that.”



Coulter Neale

Archibald Craven

The Secret Garden is the 10th show that Arizona has been a part of! She’d like to thank the cast and crew for being so much fun to work with – she never leaves rehearsal without laughing. She would also like to thank Annette for being Annette; she is the best, as Arizona stated.

“Since the first rehearsal I have become more confident in stage and learned more vocal control.”



Arizona Davis

Lily Craven

MEET THE CAST



Micah McLaughlin
Colin Craven

Micah has been in eight musicals so far, including three Central Wyoming College productions. She would like to thank her family and her directors for their support.

“I am similar to my character because I always feel better when I’m outside in nature doing things rather than just sitting around.”

The CWC Theatre is so lucky to have Drew’s knowledge and experience for this production of *The Secret Garden*. He has been seen on the CWC stage many times, including as Hamlet in *Hamlet*.

“I’m excited to be a part of new era of theatre at CWC. One that I’m sure will foster and feature the great amount of talent we have in our community.”



Drew Thornton
Dr. Neville Craven



Jeremy Swanton
Dickon

This is Jeremy’s first CWC show!

“There are so many people I would like to thank, I can’t list them all, but I would like to specifically thank Dad, Zoe, Sarah, Tamar, and Jewel – can you believe? Thank you Annette, for your continued belief in me; and the entire Thornton family for your support. Most of all, thank you Drew – my steadfast travel companion – who saw me through. I wouldn’t be here without all of you. Amor Fati.”

MEET THE CAST



Lily Draper
Martha

Lily is a multi-talented, heavily involved member of our team. She would like to thank Annette Thornton for her ongoing dedication to the keeping the arts thriving here in Riverton.

“There is nothing like the feeling after a good rehearsal. I love the collaboration and the challenges and the community. Every show is a one-of-a-kind experience.”

Patrick brings experience from around ten past productions. He wishes to thank God and Jesus, his wife and her mother, and anyone else who has showed him support.

“I want the audience to experience music, beauty, and love; and witness their power to heal and resurrect a wounded heart.”



Patrick Bergin
Ben Weatherstaff



Molly Bergin
Rose Lennox

Molly has acted in and directed over 30 shows in the last couple decades! She has had an abundant and beautiful life of theatre. Some of her favorite parts were Guildenstern from Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Porsche from the Merchant of Venice, and Anna from The King and I. Molly would like to thank her family for pushing her to be here, and her theatre family for letting her be in the show with three little kids running around. She says she is one lucky duck!

“There's something relieving about the fact that everyone is redeemed in the end, even if they couldn't be in life. As parents we have so many regrets and guilt from moments we've missed or ways we reacted, but this show really allows you to dig those weeds out of your garden and let the good things grow.”

MEET THE CAST



Sam Tower
Albert Lennox

Sam's work spans Shakespeare, musical theatre, comedy, and interactive performance. Favorite roles include Petruchio (*The Taming of the Shrew*), Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Billy Crocker (*Anything Goes*), Daddy Cane (*Bright Star*), Snoopy (*You're Good Man Charlie Brown*) and Pharaoh (*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*). A multi-instrumentalist who often performs banjo and guitar on stage, Sam also brings a background in improv and variety performance to his work with Central Wyoming College Theatre, and other local venues.

Madi has been a part of seven theatre productions throughout her life! *The Secret Garden* is Madi's first Central Wyoming College show, and CWC is so lucky to have her! She brings dedication and a bright spirit to every rehearsal!

"From my character, I have learned the importance of kindness and compassion towards others."



Madi Mahew
Ayah

Qwanell is a heavily involved individual in the theatre world. The CWC Theatre program is incredibly blessed to have such a talented individual as a part of the team!

"I love that theatre offers a never ending range of possibilities for expression both on stage and off, and the limitless amount of learning that there is to be had about expression and the processes that make that possible."



Qwanell Davis
Fakir

MEET THE CAST



Jennifer Neely

Ms. Medlock

Jennifer has been involved in community theater for the last 14 years and each show has been an epic adventure for her! She wants to share a big thanks to her family for their support and tolerance of her schedule (especially her husband for running lines, her parents for cheerleading, and her son for knowing how fun this is). She also wishes to thank her friends and co-workers for their enthusiastic encouragement.

“I’ve loved everything about this process. The music is incredible, the set is fabulous, the cast and crew are so wonderful and working with Annette to bring her vision to life has been awesome!”

Dawn has been in “too many productions to count!” Some of her most recent productions with CWC include *A Very Groovy Christmas Carol* and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*. She would like to extend a thank you to Annette for casting her in this production.

“From my fellow cast mates, I have learned to relax and have fun!”

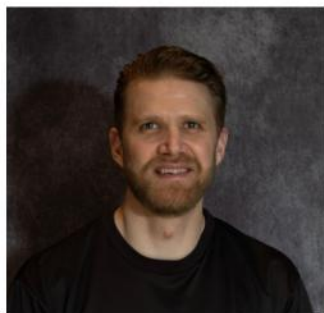


Dawn Bennett

Ms. Winthrop

Matt started doing theater six years ago and has done 18 shows so far! He would like to thank his parents who have supported his journey in theatre and the countless individuals who have encouraged him along the way.

“The most challenging thing about playing Major Holmes is that as a ‘dreamer’ I need to serve not only as a member of our ‘Greek chorus’ but also as Mary’s last recollection of me, in addition to serving as the mechanism to flow through scene changes as I help them along. Putting all these things together has been a unique and very interesting challenge.”



Matt Hartman

Major Holmes

MEET THE CAST



Suzie Herrington
Claire Holmes

This is Suzie's first show with CWC! She has been doing theatre for over 15 years and involved in dozens of productions on and off stage. Suzie would like to thank her fiancé, Sean, for his love and support.

"Growth happens when you give yourself the chance to learn from your experiences and change for the better."

This is Madeline's fourteenth and last show at CWC. Madeline has made such a great addition to the theatre program at CWC over the last several years and will be missed greatly! We wish Madeline luck on all future endeavors.

"Music rehearsals have been my favorite part. It is really difficult music that is so much fun to sing with such talented musicians."



Madeline Dike
Lieutenant Wright



Krysten Winn
Alice

Krysten has been performing since the age of five and has appeared in more than a dozen productions, including five at Central Wyoming College. Krysten is an amazing addition to this team, as she always shows up with a positive attitude and bright smile!

"This show helped me become more confident in my singing. Having solos for the first time challenged me to step past my self-doubt and trust myself."

MEET THE CAST



David Susanka

Lieutenant Shaw

David has been in more plays than he can count on his fingers so who knows? He dedicates all his past, present and future performances to Ms. Diane Springford who he could never thank enough for all of her gifts.

“The most challenging part of the performance for me was leaving my job as one of those wavy-gas-station-balloon-men for this role.”

Violet has now been in 3 CWC performances! She would like to thank the people who were able to get her to rehearsal each day. Violet’s most strengthened skill through this experience?

“Conveniently I was able to hone my ability to waltz for this performance.”



Violet Cashe

Mrs. Shaw

The Secret Garden is the fourth production Tim has been in with CWC, and the sixth overall. He would like to extend his thank you to Kimber.

“My favorite part of being in a show like this is the opportunity to sing. I love using my singing voice and I love telling an emotional story through song and acting. I've found acting in a musical production to be very liberating, and see it as the best way to express myself. I enjoy being part of every production and find a great fulfillment in what I do.”



Tim Stong

Major Shelley

MEET THE CAST



Whitney Lester
Mrs. Shelley

Whitney is so excited to have *The Secret Garden* as her second CWC musical and fourth overall musical!

She wants to thank the director, cast, and crew for such a fun time working hard to pull together something wonderful! A special thanks to her friend Arizona Davis for helping her be better and brave every single day!

“My favorite part of the show is when Mary and Dickon sing *Wick*. It feels like the magical theme for our entire production, and they are so talented! It brings a smile to my heart every time I hear them sing together.”

Zoe has been a part of 6 productions throughout her theatre career! She gives thanks to her village that is making it possible for her to do this.

“The regrowth and renewed life message in this show has helped me find myself in bigger and better ways.”



Zoe Taylor
Jane

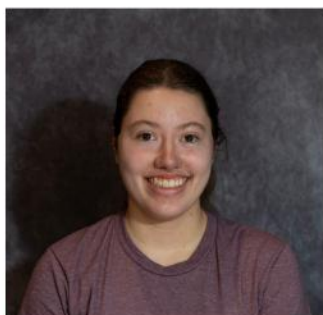
Ann Lillian has been a part of 5 shows throughout her life, her first CWC show being *The Sound of Music* back in 2023! Ann Lillian is an amazing member of our cast who always shows up cheery and ready to work!

“The best part of being in a show like this is how people are always super nice and it is really fun.”



Ann Lillian Whitmore
Youth Chorus

MEET THE CAST



Isa Vargas
Youth Chorus

Isa has been a part of 8 shows here at Central Wyoming College! She'd like to thank her sisters, her mom and dad, her friends, Annette, and Kadie.

“Through being in this show, I’ve learned how to have fun, how to sing better, and how to get more confident.”

This is Phoebe’s third production! She was also in *O Little Town of Lander*, and Wyoming Shakespeare Academy’s *Henry V*. Phoebe would like to thank her brother, David, for encouraging her to try out for *Secret Garden* and getting her to rehearsals.

“My favorite scene in the show is the opening!”



Phoebe Susanka
Youth Chorus



Sapphyra Taylor
Youth Chorus

Sapphyra has been in 5 shows throughout her life! She is an amazing member of the Youth Chorus! Sapphyra brings positivity and dedication to every single rehearsal and performance!

“From being in this show, I learned creativity, hard work, and how people truly carry the show, not just natural talent!”

MEET THE CAST



Zeke Neale
Youth Chorus

Zeke has previously performed in Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat, Bright Star, Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, and A Very Groovy Christmas Carol, all at CWC! He would like to thank his Dad for helping him with the music, his sister Rhiannon, and the Director.

“I love being on stage because it is fun to share a story with the audience.”



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MEET THE CREW



Annette Benn-Thornton

Guest Director

For this CWC production, Annette is captivated by a script and score that vividly illustrate the profound themes of *The Secret Garden*: the difficult journey from isolation to connection, the healing of deep-seated grief, and the miraculous, regenerative power of both nature and the human spirit. She is equally astounded by the exceptional talent that has gathered from all over the county to form this company. She is honored to work with such a gifted group, as they bring this story to life.

“If it’s wick, it will grow.”

Alec’s professional foundation was built in the shops of Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre, where he developed a deep appreciation for the craft and precision of live performance. With a background in fine arts and sculpture from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Illinois Chicago, Alec brings a sculptor’s eye for detail to every production. Since joining CWC, he has been dedicated to elevating the technical standards of the program, focusing on safe, professional-grade production environments and hands-on mentorship for the next generation of theater technicians. Alec is proud to support the CWC theater community and enjoys spending his time away from the stage exploring the outdoors.



Alec Henderson

Production Manager

Kara has been a part of “too many plays to count.”

Several in high school, and dozens as an Enchanted Entertainer for the Riverton Branch library.



Kara Hancock

Costume Manager

“I love being a part of the CWC theater and particularly as a costume designer for the past two years. When planning these costumes, I focused on a symbolic transition for Mary’s character. To mirror a garden’s growth, her dresses move from brown (the dirt) to green (the stem) and then to pink (the bloom). Just as the secret garden comes back to life, Mary ‘blossoms’ through her wardrobe as the story unfolds.”

MEET THE CREW



Kadie Crook

Stage Manager

Kadie has been a part of at least 20 theatre productions starting from the age of 12, eight of which with Central Wyoming College. She wishes to thank her family and her boyfriend for supporting every moment of her theatre education journey here at CWC.

“My favorite part of this rehearsal process has been how much I have been able to learn! From choreography to stage management to social media, I’ve gained so much experience!”

Kenzie has been in about 9 shows overall, and this is her 5th show for CWC! She’d like to thank her family for their support, and all the amazing people in the theater program!

“I love working behind the scenes because I get to see the show evolve from the very start to what it becomes. I also like it because everyday is a new challenge and it helps me learn more and more.”



Kenzie Harrison

Sound Board

Colt has been involved in at least seven productions throughout his theatre journey so far! He wishes to thank Alec for teaching him everything he knows.

“The best part of putting this production together was getting to see the show evolve and turn into something amazing!”



Colt Lawson

Lighting

MEET THE CREW



Alex Tower

Audio & Visual

Alex has been in five theatre productions so far! He wishes to thank his mother, Kimber Tower. The CWC Theatre program is so lucky to have such a dedicated individual as a part of the team!

“My favorite thing I learned through the process is the sound ques.”

Ana has been a part of 7 shows here at Central Wyoming College! She is an extremely dedicated individual; CWC is blessed to have her as a team member! She would like to extend a thank you to those who put on great performances.

“I have learned how to be not be as shy and how others create different characters.”



Ana Vargas

Crew Memeber

SPECIAL THANKS

The Central Wyoming College Department of Theatre would like to thank the following individuals:

- The Riverton Rotary Club
- Central Wyoming College Marketing & PR Department, KCWC Rustler Radio, Jennifer Marshall, Shawn Ennis, John Gabrielson, Claire Manning
- Matt Hartman and his countless hours of work at the Central Wyoming College Box Office
- Charene Herrera and the entire team at County 10
- Sarah Elmquist-Squires, and the entire team at WyoToday
- CWC President Dr. Brad Tyndall
- Jamie Maddock for her generous contribution of greenery to our set!
- Abigayle Reece for all her gracious help with hair design!
- Rykki Neale for her ongoing support!
- The CWC Board of Directors for their ongoing support of the theatre program

HUGE thank you to our sponsors

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