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**Whodunit? Come and see Ken Ludwig's Hilarious *The Game's Afoot* at STAGEStheatre January 10th through February 9th**

Fullerton, *CA--*STAGEStheatre is proud to present ***The Game's Afoot*** or ***Holmes for the Holidays*** written by Ken Ludwig and directed by Jason Sutton opening January 10th and running through February 9th. It is December 1936 and Broadway star William Gillette, admired the world over for his leading role in the play Sherlock Holmes, has invited his fellow Broadway cast-members to his lavish Connecticut mansion for an elegant Christmas Eve dinner party and weekend of revelry. When one of the guests is stabbed to death, the festivities in the isolated house quickly turn dangerous. As the gentle holiday snow quickly turns into a blizzard, it is up to Gillette himself, as he assumes the persona of his beloved Holmes, to track down the killer before the next victim appears in this witty, suspenseful caper. ***The Game's Afoot*** was named Best Play at the 2012 Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allen Poe Awards. Try your hand at sleuthing and guess the identity of the culprit during the surprising twists and turns!

Ludwig was inspired to write ***The Game's Afoot*** while on an extended vacation with his family in London. When he asked his children about their favorite part of their journey, which included visits to many of the historic landmarks throughout the city, they replied it was the performance of Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* at St. Martin's Theatre. Astonished by this revelation and encouraged by their enthusiasm, Ludwig decided to write his own comedic caper. "I have staked my life as a writer on the proposition that the arts make a difference in how we see the world and how we conduct our lives --- how we view charity to our neighbors and justice in our communities. One of my goals as an American playwright is to translate those aspirations to the American experience," said Ken Ludwig. "I chose to write a play about William Gillette in part because he is iconically American. And by taking the initiative to write to Conan Doyle and obtain the rights to adapt the Holmes stories to the stage, Gillette made an indelible mark on the American theatre landscape. In a way, Gillette provides us with a unique, prismatic view of American theatre at the beginning of the twentieth century, and as such, I thought he could form an exciting nucleus for a tale of American mystery and adventure.

Directing the first show of our 28th season, Jason Sutton was thrilled to kick it off with ***The Game's Afoot***!  "For my part I am attracted to comedies more often than not. I love a good farce where chaos reigns, assumptions fly, and hilarity ensues. On the other side of that coin, I do love the order and structure of a good mystery play with its suspense, its drama, and the reveal at the end that almost always includes a twist.
Imagine my surprise and delight at coming across ***The Game's Afoot***. A mystery farce that embodies all the aspects I love from both genres. The play is smart, funny, sarcastic, moody, with a twist ending worthy of Agatha Christie (that you won't see coming!) In its own unique way, ***The Game's Afoot*** takes us on hilarious, chaotic journey where a good triumph over evil and society rights itself and in the end, we have order from chaos."

***The Game's Afoot***stars: Paul Burt, Melisa Cole, Rob Downs, Jennifer Hawley, Sara LaFramboise, Andrea La Vela, Rose London, and Jared Boyd Miller.

Showtimes for ***The Game's Afoot***are Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m., Sundays at 2:00 p.m. January 10- February 9th. Tickets are $24.00, $22.00 for students and seniors.  For reservations, visit our website at www.stagesoc.org

About STAGEStheatre:  Celebrating its 28th year in business, STAGEStheatre is one of Orange County's most innovative community theaters.  It produces nearly 15 productions annually, showcasing local playwriting, acting and directing talent.  STAGEStheatre is, and will continue to be dedicated to the development of the artist.  It is located at 400 E. Commonwealth in Downtown Fullerton (between Lemon and Balcom).