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## THE PLAY

Out on the misty moors of England's West Country, a malicious, supernatural hound is the main suspect in the mysterious death of Sir Charles Baskerville. Dubbed "The Hound of the Baskervilles," this monstrous creature has so terrified the neighbors of the Baskerville estate that they are refusing to cross the **moor** at night.

The family doctor, Dr. Mortimer, and the heir to the Baskerville estate, Sir Henry Baskerville, come to London one foggy morning in 1899 to enlist the expertise of "consulting detective" Sherlock Holmes and his friend, Dr. John Watson. Intrigued by the case, Holmes accepts it immediately. As usual, Dr. Watson is along for the ride to chronicle the unique genius of Holmes.

Both in London and at the Baskerville estate, this spine-chilling mystery intensifies. Can Holmes unravel the case and free the Baskerville family from the haunting of the hound? ●

**moor** – see inside article.

# KEN LUDWIG'S BASKERVILLE

## A SHERLOCK HOLMES MYSTERY

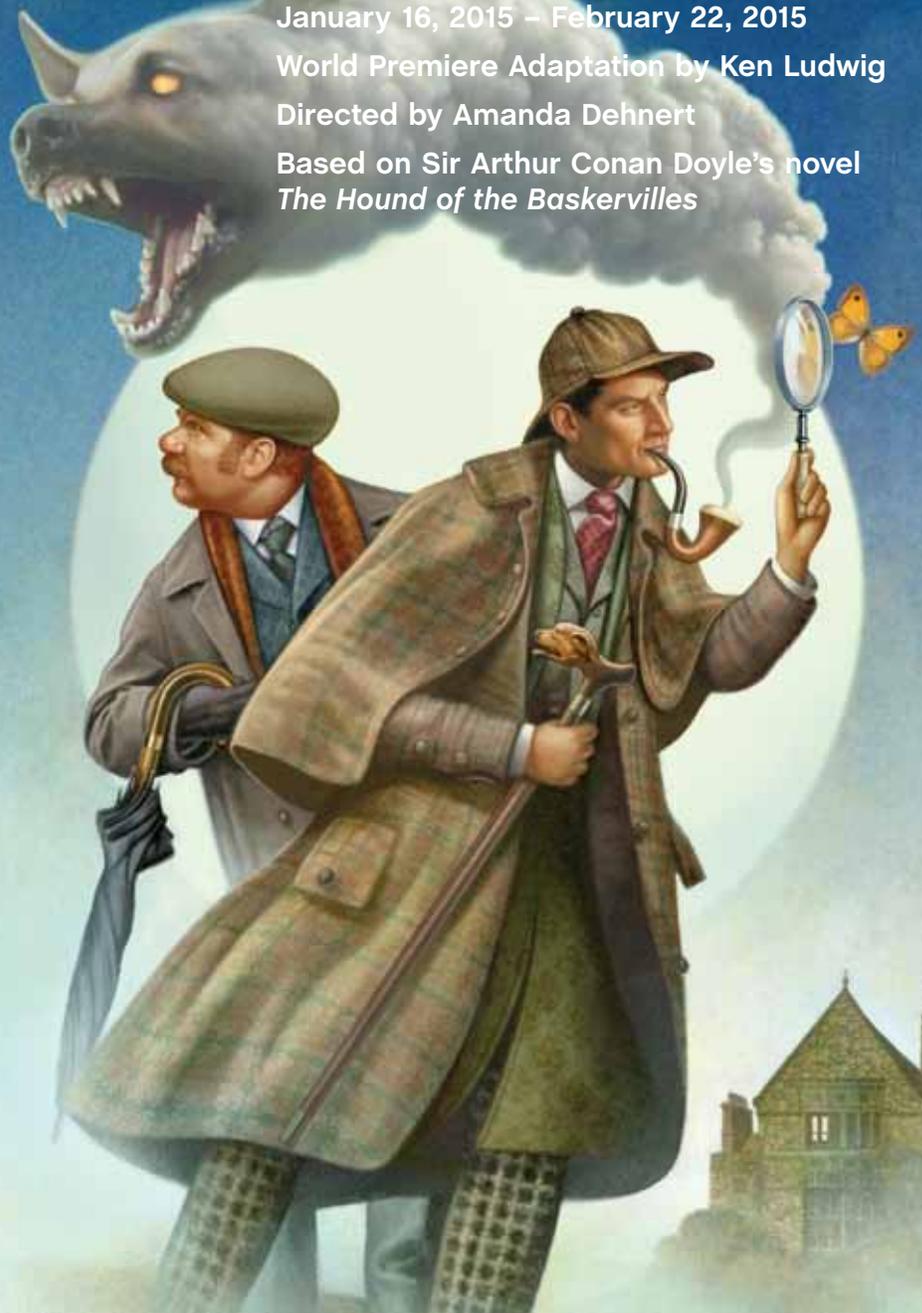
A Co-Production with McCarter Theatre Center  
Now playing in the Kreeger Theater

January 16, 2015 – February 22, 2015

World Premiere Adaptation by Ken Ludwig

Directed by Amanda Dehnert

Based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel  
*The Hound of the Baskervilles*



# MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT:



Ken Ludwig

*“My hope is that Baskerville is about the theater as much as it is about Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson. I want it to be seen not only as a tale of fellowship and courage, but also as an adventure in theater-making itself.”*

Ken Ludwig is an internationally-acclaimed playwright whose work has been performed in more than 30 countries in over 20 languages. His first play on Broadway, *Lend Me A Tenor*, which the New York Times called “one of the two great farces by a living writer,” won three Tony Awards. *Lend Me A Tenor*, was originally produced on Broadway by Andrew Lloyd Webber. It has proved to be one of the most popular comedies of the past two decades.

Ludwig graduated from Haverford College, Harvard Law School and Cambridge University. He studied music at Harvard with Leonard Bernstein and theater history at Cambridge. He practiced law for several years with the firm of Steptoe & Johnson, where he remains Of Counsel. He received an honorary doctorate of humane letters from York College of Pennsylvania. He is married with two children and lives in Washington, D.C.

**farce** – a slapstick, comedic work of theater

# SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE, M.D.: CREATOR OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

Arthur Conan Doyle was born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1859. Doyle was a doctor who specialized in **ophthalmology** and had a small medical practice in London. It wasn't as successful as he wished, but it did leave him time for his literary pursuits.

By 1886, Doyle had published a few short stories, but was ready to write “something fresher and crisper and more workmanlike.” He loved Edgar Allan Poe's detective stories about C. Auguste Dupin, so he decided to create his own detective character. His first Sherlock Holmes work was the novel *A Study in Scarlet*.

The Sherlock Holmes mysteries – 56 short stories and 4 novels – made Doyle famous and one of the best paid authors of his time. While the public clamored for more Holmes stories, Doyle's relationship with his creation was ambivalent at best. He wanted to write



more than just detective stories and longed for his historical fiction to be as successful. In 1893 he even killed off Holmes, only to bring him back to life again due to public outcry.

Doyle died from a heart attack at the age of 71 in 1930. There is a statue of him in Crowborough, England and one of Holmes in Picardy Place, Edinburgh. ●

**ophthalmology** – branch of medicine dealing with diseases and disorders of the eyes

Many of the Sherlock Holmes stories were published in *The Strand Magazine*. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was published chapter by chapter in the magazine before it was published as a full novel. This serialization of novels was a common practice for a long time. A few other examples are *The Three Musketeers*, *Anna Karenina* and *A Tale of Two Cities*.

**a! ACTIVITY** Write the outline of your own story. Determine how you would write this story if you had to serialize it (publish it chapter by chapter).



## MISTY MOORS

*The moors (the setting of this play) are large, open marshlands found in the British Isles. Often overgrown, the moors have a cool, damp climate that produces a lot of fog. The moors can be misty and mysterious and are a favorite setting for British Romantic literature.*

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**a! ACTIVITY** Think like a set designer: how would you create the setting of the moors onstage?



# SHERLOCK HOLMES, “CONSULTING DETECTIVE”

**S**herlock Holmes has inspired novels, television shows and movies. From the BBC series *Sherlock* to the pill-popping doctor in Fox’s *House M.D.* to Robert Downey Jr.’s action hero in the Warner Bros. film, Holmes has been reimagined countless times.

Holmes is a “consulting detective.” He can be hired to solve cases and frequently helps the police whether they like it or not. His detective process is called deductive reasoning. He notices very small details from which he draws conclusions that help him solve his cases.

Holmes appears aloof and sometimes rude. He often bends the rules (like keeping information from the police) and manipulates witnesses and suspects. While he is methodical in his thinking, he is disorganized in his lifestyle. He often relies on Dr. Watson to remind him to eat and sleep. He has a flair for showmanship and enjoys revealing his discoveries to his mystified peers. Otherwise, he prefers to be alone, unwinding by listening to music or playing the violin. ●

“The world is full of obvious things which nobody by any chance ever observes.”

—Sherlock Holmes,  
*The Hound of the Baservilles*



# DR. JOHN H. WATSON, LATE OF THE ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

**D**r. John H. Watson serves as Holmes’ foil, friend and biographer. Holmes rarely gets the credit he deserves from the police and the newspapers. Watson feels this injustice, which prompts him to chronicle all of Holmes’ cases.

Watson was an army doctor stationed in India and the Middle East until he was wounded. With his health ruined, he is sent back to London and provided with a monthly pension from the military. Holmes and Watson are roommates, renting apartment 221B on Baker Street from their landlady Mrs. Hudson. Watson is a skilled doctor and surgeon as well as a good shot with a pistol. These are skills that come in handy for many of Holmes’ cases. ●

**foil** – a character whose qualities contrast with the qualities of another character to highlight the qualities of the other character

## SIDNEY PAGET, THE ILLUSTRATOR OF SHERLOCK HOLMES



The iconic image of Sherlock Holmes is of a good-looking man in a deerstalker cap and trench coat with either a magnifying glass or pipe. Sidney Paget, the illustrator for many of the Sherlock Holmes stories, created this image. Though Doyle liked Paget’s illustrations, he saw Holmes differently. “I saw [Sherlock] as very tall—over 6 feet, but so

excessively lean that he seemed considerably taller,” said *A Study in Scarlet*. He had, as I imagined him, a thin razor-like face, with a great hawk’s-bill of a nose, and two small eyes, set close together on either side of it.” Paget’s drawings were more handsome, which may have contributed to the stories’ popularity with female readers.



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle found inspiration for Sherlock Holmes in a doctor he worked under during medical school. Dr. Joseph Bell used deductive reasoning to diagnose his patients, often shocking them with his detailed conclusions based on the smallest observations. He consulted on a few police investigations in Scotland.

# SHERLOCK AHEAD OF HIS TIME: FORENSIC CRIMINOLOGY

**T**he tools and methods of forensic investigation Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote into the Sherlock Holmes stories were ahead of their time. Many of the methods he uses would not come into standard criminology practice for many years.

- While Holmes’ magnifying glass and microscope might seem simple today, in Victorian England they were the most technologically advanced optical instruments available.
- Holmes was 120 years ahead of his time in trying to protect a crime scene from contamination.
- Holmes uses fingerprint detection in the novel *The Sign of Four* published in 1890. It wasn’t until 1901 that Scotland Yard (the London Metropolitan Police Service) began using fingerprint evidence.
- For centuries poisons had been considered an undetectable method of murder. Holmes was using scientific methods to detect the presence of poisons long before actual contemporary toxicologists had developed such chemical analysis tests.

**a! ACTIVITY** Borrow an object from a friend or family member. Figure out how much you can determine about the person by examining this possession. Write down these observations and check your conclusions with your friend or family member.

# THE PLAY'S THE THING

Part of the theatricality of this play is having three actors play more than 40 characters (everyone except Holmes and Watson). We asked actors Michael Glenn and Jane Pfitsch about undertaking this challenge.

## What is it like to play multiple characters?

**Michael Glenn:** It's great fun! You really have to keep on your toes and pay attention.

**Jane Pfitsch:** You change your clothes a lot! It can get a little confusing, remembering who you are at any given moment and where they're from. There are a lot of accents and dialects in this show. In order to delineate the characters, you have to make bold physical and vocal choices.

## What are the challenges?

**JP:** I think the challenges are also what's fun about it. Figuring out the external architecture of each character (how they move, how they speak) is just the beginning. Once you have an idea of who they are, you can then delve into their point of view and try to make sure each character is specific.

**MG:** The challenge lies in making them all distinctive, making sure that the characters don't bleed into each other. It helps having different accents or costumes on which to hang the characters.

## What do you enjoy about playing multiple roles?

**JP:** The costume helps a lot with character. For example, Mrs. Barrymore has a heavier dress, and it's always worn over Miss Stapleton and oftentimes Cartwright (because the costume changes are so fast), so she's more restricted, just because she's wearing so much more clothing!

**MG:** You have to always be present, always be involved. Sometimes, when you're just playing one character, you can get a little introverted with your process, diving into your character's psychology. But when you're doubling, you can't get too bogged down.

## Helpful Hints for Theater Audiences

As an audience member at the theater, YOU are part of the show! Just as you see and hear the actors onstage, they can see and hear you in the audience. To help the performers do their best, please remember the following:

Arrive at least 30 minutes early.

Visit the restroom before the show starts.

Before the show begins, turn off your cell phone, watch alarms, pagers and other electronic devices. If anything rings by accident, shut it off immediately.

Save food and drinks for the lobby. There is no eating or drinking inside the theater.

Walk to and from your seat - no running in the theater!

Do not talk, whisper, sing or hum.

Do not use cell phones for calls, text messages, pictures or games.

Keep your feet on the floor, not on the seat in front of you.

Avoid getting up during a show because it distracts your neighbors and the performers. If you must leave, wait for a scene change, then exit quietly and quickly.

Performers appreciate enthusiastic applause rather than whistling or shouting.

Cameras and videotape are prohibited because they are distracting to the performers.

**Enjoy the show!**

## THREE BIG QUESTIONS

1. What makes a good mystery?
2. How can superstition play into fear or suspense?
3. In what ways is this play an especially theatrical experience?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### TELEVISION

- *Sherlock*: Hartswood Films, BBC Wales, Masterpiece Theatre, 2010-present.
- *House, M.D.*: Heel & Toe Films, Shore Z Productions, 2004-2012.
- *Elementary*: Hill of Beans Productions, Timberman-Beverly Productions, CBS Television Studios, 2012-present.

### FILM

- *How Sherlock Changed the World*: PBS, 2013.
- *Sherlock Holmes*: Warner Bros., 2009.

### LITERATURE

- *Memories and Adventures* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
- *The Valley of Fear and other novels* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

### ON THE WEB

- Read the full collection of Sherlock Holmes novels and short stories for free – <http://www.readsherlock.com/> OR [http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page)
- Website for the Sherlock Holmes Museum at 221B Baker Street London, England – <http://www.sherlock-holmes.co.uk/>
- *Sherlock Holmes: The Man Who Never Lived and Will Never Die* exhibit at the Museum of London – <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/london-wall/whats-on/exhibitions-displays/sherlock-holmes/>



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