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# Mystery and Merriment in 'Case of the Christmas Goose'

BY HARRY CHERKINIAN	DEC. 09, 2019	2:28 P.M.		
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A hotel robbery. A stolen precious gem. A missing Christmas goose—with the gem stuffed down its throat. All perfect holiday ingredients for Milwaukee Entertainment Group's *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Goose*. Holiday revelers looking to add some mystery and merriment as we count down to the 25th will enjoy this wintry chase as the famous detective and his assistant, Dr. Watson, track down the jewel thief through the streets of London.

Inspired by Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*, this American play was adapted by Michael Menendian and John Weagly and shows the lighter side to the famous detective and his sidekick. No espionage. No murders. Just an animated group of local characters well played by the eight-member ensemble under the sharp-eyed direction of Amanda J. Hull.

Leave it to Holmes to always be working, even during the holidays. As Holmes and Watson, Chris Goode and Josh Scheibe give wonderfully restrained performances—serious, focused yet allowing a smidgen of dry British

humor here and there. And there are some great character performances as well as the supporting actors play multiple roles.

Gladys Chmiel brings a bawdy, comical side to the prim Mrs. Hudson, who sneaks a bit of "holiday cheer" (read: liquor) from Holmes while resting in his chair. Leslie Fitzwater delights as the cockney-accented "goose seller," as well as Jonathan Gideon as the wrongly accused thief (the solid accents come courtesy of dialect coach Raeleen McMillion). Showing a remarkable range and depth as the jewel thief, Jake Konrath brings the mystery to a climactic close with his retelling of the theft, pleading for mercy from Holmes. It's an impassioned turn and gives his character a three-dimensional complexity.

There are some clever, funny bits here as this play's storyline crosses over with *A Christmas Carol*, in particular with the goose, Scrooge and even Tiny Tim. As always, Homes and Watson solve the case and do so in the spirit of the season.

Through Dec. 21 at the Brumder Mansion, 3046 W. Wisconsin Ave.

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## **Harry Cherkinian**

Harry Cherkinian is an award-winning writer and reviewer in the arts and entertainment field, specializing in music and theater.

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