

Show Guide

SISTER ACT™



PHOTO BY JOAN MARCUS

DINNER THEATRES
Chanhassen

From play selection to opening night:
The process of getting a CDT show on stage



As a producing theatre company, CDT has facilities to create all production elements from scratch. From initial concepts of scenic design and costume creation to choreography, music, lighting, sound and props-*everything* is created at Chanhassen.



After a show is selected, the artistic director works closely with the design team in development. Once designers understand the director's vision, they begin researching and creating.

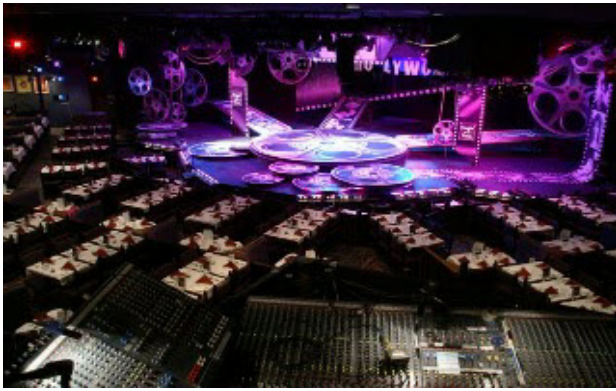
The scenic designer creates a scenic plot on paper and then makes a scale model of the set, set pieces and backdrops. From these, the technical director begins to build the world of the show.

The costume designer sketches costume renderings and selects fabric swatches for each costume. From these drawings, costume artisans hand-make patterns and begin building costumes.



The properties master begins gathering the wide range of props called for in the script. From loaves of bread and shrunken heads to foreign currencies and hairspray cans, props are created with each item hand-crafted to look like the real thing according to the time period.

It takes the scene, costume and prop shops about twelve weeks to produce everything needed for the show. Items need to be made sturdily to handle wear and tear.



The musical director re-works the musical score for CDT's live, professional orchestra and rehearses with musicians.

The choreographer works closely with the director and music director to create actors' movements for dance and musical numbers.

Sound and lighting designers plot technical components to create effect and mood.



Actors begin rehearsals just 2½ weeks prior to opening. When they arrive, they have their lines and much of the music prepared.

Rehearsals are packed with perfecting music, learning choreography and blocking scenes.

In-between are costume fittings and press interviews. During a rehearsal period, many actors do double-duty; they rehearse by day and perform the currently-running production by night.



The currently-running production closes over the weekend, at which time the old set is removed to make room for the new one.

Over "Tech Week," scenery is brought in, drops hung, special effects set, and the floor painted. Light and sound technicians re-direct over 250 separate lighting instruments in accordance with the designer's plot. Body microphones are re-plotted and all sound cues recorded. Finishing touches are made to costumes, scenery is put into place and the production stage manager coordinates the details and communication.



Everything comes together for the actors' first stage rehearsal. The director, cast, orchestra and design team work to make sure that everything is seamless.

Can you believe the company has only three days to make this happen before opening night? It's nothing short of amazing that a new musical can be created in such a short time. Another op'nin', another show!

SYNOPSIS

Act One

On Christmas Eve 1977, in a disco nightclub in Philadelphia, singer Deloris Van Cartier and her two back-ups are performing in front of an empty house. A gangster and his four henchmen appear. Curtis Jackson, the gangster-nightclub owner, is also Deloris' boyfriend ("Take Me To Heaven"). Deloris is overjoyed as she believes he is going to introduce her to a record producer. She soon learns, however, that this is not to be. Jackson tells her he cannot join her for Christmas Day but gives her a distinctive fur coat that formerly belonged to his wife. Hurt and frustrated, Deloris tells her backup singers about her dreams of stardom and fame ("Fabulous, Baby!"). She decides to break up with Jackson and head out of Philadelphia to go fulfill her dreams on her own. On her way out of the club, Deloris witnesses Jackson and his crew murder someone accused of "squealing" to the cops, and she rightfully becomes terrified. Deloris runs for it as Jackson orders his men to get her and bring her back.

Sometime later, Deloris runs into a police station and tells the desk chief, Eddie, about what has happened. The two recognize each other as old friends from school with Deloris re-calling his nickname "Sweaty Eddie." Eddie reveals that the police force has been trying to nail Jackson for his crimes, but have been unsuccessful because they never had any hard evidence - until now. Eddie suggests that given Deloris' position as a witness, she needs to go into a protection program and sends her to the place he believes Jackson will never find her...a convent! When Deloris arrives, she is disappointed to learn from Mother Superior that contact with the outside world is limited and that she cannot smoke, drink, or wear any of her less than appropriate clothing ("Here Within These Walls").

When Deloris joins the other nuns for dinner, she is introduced as "Sister Mary Clarence" and after several comedic interactions with the overly perky Sister Mary Patrick, Deloris discovers just how limiting life inside the convent will be ("It's Good To Be A Nun"). When Deloris asks the sisters about what they're missing, Mother Superior orders that Deloris go on a fast & refuses her supper. Meanwhile, back in his nightclub, Jackson is frustrated that he cannot find Deloris anywhere. He tells Joey, TJ, and Pablo how he will not stop until he finds and kills Deloris ("When I Find My Baby").

Hungry from her forced fast, Deloris sneaks across the street to a bar and is followed by bubbly Sister Mary Patrick and shy Sister Mary Robert. When the two nuns arrive they see how fun things can be outside of the convent. However, Deloris recognizes Jackson's thugs, Joey, TJ, and Pablo as they also enter the bar. Luckily, a bar fight breaks out, giving Deloris, Sister Mary Patrick, and Sister Mary Robert a chance to escape. Eddie and Mother Superior meet them back at the convent. Mother Superior confronts Deloris, telling her that she must conform to the life of the nuns. Eddie agrees and reveals that Jackson has upped the price on her head, so she needs to be careful. Deloris storms back to the convent after being informed that she has to wake up at 5 am and join the church choir. Eddie, now alone with only the drunks and homeless on the street, privately reflects on his desire to impress Deloris ("I Could Be That Guy").

The following morning, Deloris attends the choir practice and discovers that they are in very poor shape. Deloris offers to take over from Sister Mary Lazarus, an older nun, and manages to teach the nuns how to sing in key and on time. She is also able to break the quiet and timid Sister Mary Robert out of her shell ("Raise Your Voice"). That Sunday, the choir performs a rousing up-tempo hymn ("Take Me To Heaven (Reprise)). Although the church is struggling, the improved performance and new material bring an influx of donations and membership. Mother Superior, however, is horrified that the simple traditional choir she knew such a short time ago has changed and become modern.



SYNOPSIS (continued)

Act Two

Mother Superior wants to get rid of Deloris, but Monsignor O'Hara reminds her that because of Deloris, the men who were planning to buy the church building and turn out the nuns have instead fallen in love with the re-energized choir and have pledged their money to help improve the church. Over the last few weeks, the choir has become incredibly successful and the money from donations has paid for the church to be remodeled ("Sunday Morning Fever").

Later, Monsignor O'Hara bursts in with exciting news: the choir has been asked to perform a special concert in front of the Pope! Deloris is thrilled but also regretful; Jackson and his goons have spotted Deloris with the choir on the television accepting the invitation. Jackson orders his henchmen to get into the convent and bring Deloris back. TJ, Joey, and Pablo discuss how they will do this ("Lady in the Long Black Dress"). Meanwhile, Mother Superior prays to God and asks why He has given her the challenge that is named Deloris ("I Haven't Got A Prayer"). She soon receives a call from Eddie.

Deloris is approached by the nuns before they go to sleep, asking her to lead them in praying for their show for the Pope, which is the following day ("Bless The Show"). Mother Superior arrives shortly thereafter and informs Deloris that the court date for Jackson has moved up to the next day and she must leave immediately. The other nuns overhear and Deloris is forced to tell them the truth about who she really is and explain why she cannot perform with them. Deloris quickly runs off to get her things, followed by Sister Mary Robert, while the other nuns return to their rooms disappointed.

As Deloris prepares to leave, Sister Mary Robert begs to come with her stating that she has been inspired to become a stronger person and go after the things she wants ("The Life I Never Led"). Deloris tells Sister Mary Robert that she is capable of doing it all herself if she really wants to. Deloris leaves the convent and stays at Eddie's house for the night. She is overjoyed to finally be able to testify against Jackson and his boys the next day and can then go back to pursuing the career she's dreamed of ("Fabulous, Baby!" (Reprise)). She begins to feel guilt over abandoning her sisters when they needed her most, and upon further reflection comes to realize that the choices she is making will leave her with fame and money, but not happiness. She decides to return to the convent and sing with her sisters ("Sister Act").

Elsewhere, Jackson thinks up a new way to get into the convent ("When I Find My Baby" (Reprise)). Dressed as nuns, Jackson, Joey, TJ, and Pablo sneak into the Queen of Angels Cathedral where they find and chase Deloris. The nuns decide to take action to protect Deloris, but Mother Superior is adamant that they stay away and call the police. This prompts an outburst from Sister Mary Robert who tells Mother Superior that she won't be quiet anymore ("The Life I Never Led" (Reprise)). The other nuns agree and all go running through the convent looking for Deloris.

Deloris eventually runs into Jackson, leading to a final confrontation. He is armed and dangerous, and she is scared but calm. Jackson demands that Deloris get on her knees and beg for her life. However, all the sisters run in unafraid & stand in front of her, telling Jackson that he will have to go through them first ("Sister Act" (Reprise)). Jackson is about to start firing at the nuns when Eddie comes in and fights Jackson off. He arrests Jackson and his thugs, after which, Eddie and Deloris share a passionate embrace. Mother Superior and Deloris come to a truce and agree to accept each other. As the curtain begins to fall, we transition to the performance in front of the Pope as the nuns stand in unison with their voices ringing in harmony, led by a changed for the better Deloris Van Cartier ("Spread The Love Around").



MUSICAL NUMBERS

Act One

- **Take Me to Heaven** - Deloris, Michelle, Tina
- **Fabulous, Baby!** - Deloris, Michelle, Tina
- **Here Within These Walls** - Mother Superior, Deloris, Nuns
- **It's Good to be a Nun** - Mary Lazarus, Mary Patrick, Mary Robert, Deloris, Mary Theresa, Nuns
- **When I Find My Baby** - Curtis, Joey, Pablo, TJ
- **I Could Be That Guy** - Eddie, Homeless Men
- **Here Within These Walls (reprise)** - Mother Superior
- **Raise Your Voice** - Deloris, Mary Robert, Mary Patrick, Mary Lazarus, Nuns
- **Take Me to Heaven (reprise)** - Nuns, Deloris, Mary Patrick, Mary Robert

Act Two

- **Sunday Morning Fever** - Monsignor O'Hara, Deloris, Nuns, Mother Superior, Mary Patrick, Eddie, Mary Lazarus
- **Take Me to Heaven (reprise)** - Deloris, Mary Patrick, Nuns
- **Lady in the Long Black Dress** - Joey, Pablo, TJ
- **I Haven't Got a Prayer** - Mother Superior
- **Bless Our Show** - Deloris, Mary Patrick, Mary Robert, Mary Lazarus, Nuns
- **The Life I Never Led** - Mary Robert
- **Fabulous, Baby! (reprise)** - Eddie, Deloris, Fantasy Dancers
- **Sister Act** - Deloris
- **When I Find My Baby (reprise)** - Curtis
- **The Life I Never Led (reprise)** - Mary Robert
- **Sister Act (reprise)** - Deloris, Mother Superior, Mary Robert, Mary Patrick, Mary Lazarus, Nuns
- **Spread the Love Around** - Mother Superior, Deloris, Nuns, Mary Patrick, Mary Robert, Mary Lazarus, Men
- **Raise Your Voice** - Full Company

CHARACTERS

Deloris Van Cartier Aspiring singer who witnesses a murder & is placed under protective custody in a convent under the name Sister Mary Clarence. Loud-mouthed & sassy, but ultimately caring.

Michelle & Tina Deloris' back up singers.

Curtis Nightclub owner, gangster & Deloris' boyfriend. Cocky & controlling, always on the verge of violence.

Joey One of Curtis's thugs. Believes himself to be quite the ladies' man.

Pablo One of Curtis' thugs. A natural follower, speaks in Spanish.

TJ One of Curtis' thugs. Deft and cognizant of the facts, constantly in a state of ignorant bliss.

Ernie One of Curtis' thugs. First appears to be a yes-man, but turns out to be an undercover police informant.

Eddie Philadelphia police officer & high school classmate of Deloris who helps get her into hiding. He still yearns for Deloris after all these years & dreams of being her hero.

Mother Superior The prioress of Queen of Angels Cathedral. Sarcastic & a bit stiff, she is very protective of the Sisters under her care.

Monsignor O'Hara The Priest of Queen of Angels Cathedral.

Sister Mary Patrick A nun. Consistently perky, enthusiastic, & easily excitable.

Sister Mary Robert A young postulant. Shy & soft-spoken, singing with Deloris helps her find her voice.

Sister Mary Lazarus A nun & head of the choir. Deadpan & the least welcoming of any of the nuns, she eventually gets caught up in Deloris's soul music.

Sister Mary Martin-of-Tours A nun. In her own world, but has her moments of surprising clarity.

Sister Mary Theresa The oldest nun. Decrepit at first glance, but secretly packs a punch.



FROM SCREEN TO STAGE

Inspiration

Sister Act is based on the hit 1992 film comedy of the same name, starring Whoopi Goldberg. With a movie so popular and musically focused, Stage Entertainment decided to produce a stage adaptation. They brought on Oscar and Tony-winning composer Alan Menken, along with lyricist and frequent collaborator Glenn Slater. Bill and Cheri Steinkellner were also hired to write the book.

Menken's musical score was inspired by 1970s music: specifically disco and gospel. As a result, the setting was changed from Reno and San Francisco in the 90s (the original setting of the movie) to Philadelphia in the 70s. During the transfer from the West End to Broadway, the script underwent several revisions and Whoopi Goldberg herself joined as a producer.

Fun Fact

While Paul Rudnick was writing the screenplay for the original film, Bette Midler (who was attached to star at the time) suggested he should go to an actual convent to do research. He stayed with the sisters of Regina Laudis Abbey in Bethlehem, Connecticut. One member of this convent is Mother Dolores Hart, O.S.B., who as a younger woman was an actress, singer, dancer, and Hollywood "it girl." As one of Hollywood's rising stars, she appeared in many films, such as the Elvis vehicles *Loving You* (1957) and *King Creole* (1958), as well as the beach romance *Where the Boys Are* (1960). In 1960, she also starred in *St. Francis of Assisi*, where she portrayed Clare, a woman who gives up everything to follow Saint Francis and founds the Order of Poor Clares. At the height of her career, Dolores stunned the world by making the decision to become a cloistered nun and enter the Abbey of Regina Laudis. "I just knew that this was what God wanted from me," she said years later. Mother Hart is the only known nun to be a voting member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. She and her fellow nuns enjoy watching the Academy nominated films each year.

Productions

Sister Act first premiered at the Pasadena Playhouse in California, running from October 24 to December 23, 2006. While in residence, it broke various box office records. The production ended up moving to the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, Georgia & ran from January 17 to February 25, 2007. The musical then moved across the pond to London. The West End production premiered on June 2, 2009 at the London Palladium starring Patina Miller, Sheila Hancock, and Ian Lavender. It ran for more than a year & closed on October 30, 2010.

Sister Act opened in New York at the Broadway Theatre on April 20, 2011. After the West End production closed, the show went through a multitude of revisions helmed by new book writer Douglas Carter Beane. Patina Miller transferred with the production in the role of Deloris, co-starring with Victoria Clark, Fred Applegate, and Chester Gregory. It closed on August 26, 2012 after 561 performances. The Broadway production was nominated for five 2011 Tony Awards and five Drama Desk Awards.

The musical has launched two tours: one in the UK and Ireland that ran from October 2010 to October 2012, and one in North America that opened during the fall of 2012. *Sister Act* has also been performed in Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Australia, South Korea, and Mexico.

Fun Fact

Mother Superior introduces Deloris as "Sister Mary...Clarence. Named for St. Clarence of Vienne." Saint Clarence was a bishop of the diocese of Vienne in France and is the Patron Saint of those in prison.



COMPOSER, LYRICIST & PLAYWRIGHT BIOS

Alan Menken (composer)

Introduced to musical theatre as a young child in New York, Alan Menken began composing while he was supposed to be practicing his piano lessons. Although he had aspirations of working in music, Menken thought he was doomed to the “family business”: dentistry.

After earning a degree in music from New York University, Menken found that he was able to support himself by writing jingles, accompanying ballet classes, and music directing shows for others.

His collaboration with Howard Ashman began with *God Bless You Mr. Rosewater* and quickly moved onto the off-Broadway show, *Little Shop of Horrors*. Menken is best known to the general public for his work with Disney. He provided the score for the films *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty & the Beast*, *Aladdin*, *Newsies*, *Pocahontas*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Hercules*, *Home on the Range*, *Enchanted*, and *Tangled*. *Beauty & the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Newsies* and *Aladdin* have all been adapted for the stage.

Menken has been a nominee and winner of multiple Oscars, Golden Globes, Grammys, Tonys, and Drama Desk Awards. He lives in upstate New York with his wife Janis, a former professional ballet dancer, and their children Anna and Nora.

Glenn Slater (lyricist)

Slater began writing for the theatre at age seventeen, with the off-Broadway production of *How I Survived High School*. While attending Harvard, he contributed to the legendary Hasty Pudding Theatricals.

Slater was nominated for the Best Original Score Tony Award for the stage adaptation of *The Little Mermaid* in 2008 and for his work on *Sister Act the Musical* in 2011.

He is perhaps best known for his work on the Disney films *Tangled* and *Home on the Range*. Along with Menken, he received a Grammy Award in the Best Song Written for Visual Media category for the song “I See The Light” from the film *Tangled*. The same song also earned him Oscar and Golden Globe nominations for Best Original Song.

A member of both ASCAP and the Dramatists' Guild, Slater resides in Manhattan with his wife, composer and lyricist Wendy Leigh Wilf, and their sons Benjamin and Daniel.

Cheri & Bill Steinkellner (book)

Married couple Cheri and Bill Steinkellner are winners of multiple Emmys, Golden Globes, Peoples' Choice, BAFTA, Writers' Guild, and TV Land Legend Awards for writing/producing “Cheers” and “Teacher's Pet.” They also received a Tony nomination in 2011 for their work on *Sister Act the Musical*.

Bill is known for co-writing *The PeeWee Herman Show*, and Cheri is known for writing the award-winning musical *Hello! My Baby*, which was California's first All-State Musical in 2014. The pair are also founders of Instaplay - L.A.'s original all-improvised musical.

The Steinkellers currently teach at Stanford, USC and UCSB in Santa Barbara where they raised their favorite children/writers/artists: Kit, Teddy and Emma.

Douglas Carter Beane

(additional book material)

Beane's Broadway play *The Little Dog Laughed* was nominated for the Tony Award for Best New Play and won the GLAAD media award for Outstanding New York Theater.

His other works include *As Bees In Honey Drown* (Outer Critics Circle John Gassner Award), *Music From A Sparkling Planet* and *The Country Club*. He wrote the screenplay for the film adaptation of his play *Advice From A Caterpillar* which won Aspen Comedy Festival's Best Feature award. His film *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar*, produced by Steven Spielberg, was the number one film in America for a month.

Beane wrote the book for *Xanadu*, a stage musical adaptation of the 1980 film of the same name, adding new plot twists and humor parodying the original movie.

As artistic director of the New York Theater Company Drama Department, he has produced over forty productions, including acclaimed revivals of *As Thousands Cheer*, *June Moon*, & *The Torch-bearers* as well as world premiere works by Paul Rudnick, David Sedaris & Wendy Wasserstein. He currently resides in New York City with his family.



SISTER ACT

Word Search

N M A R Y C L A R E N C E M
R E E E P O L I C E H R O S
P E V E I C O N V E N T C I
U H T A E D E R E N H R H S
K C I S E M D S E E A S U T
M E H L I H E E R D A I R E
O E S E A S O S Y M R S C R
N R M I T D U T T T I U H A
S A I E T P E S E R A I M C
I E A O E R I L O M A E O T
G K N R H R U L P A E I W T
N H I R H C E C L H A K O S
O O E C H D T A M N I O A T
R N I G H T C L U B R A T T

Deloris
Nightclub
Christmas
Curtis
Murder
Police

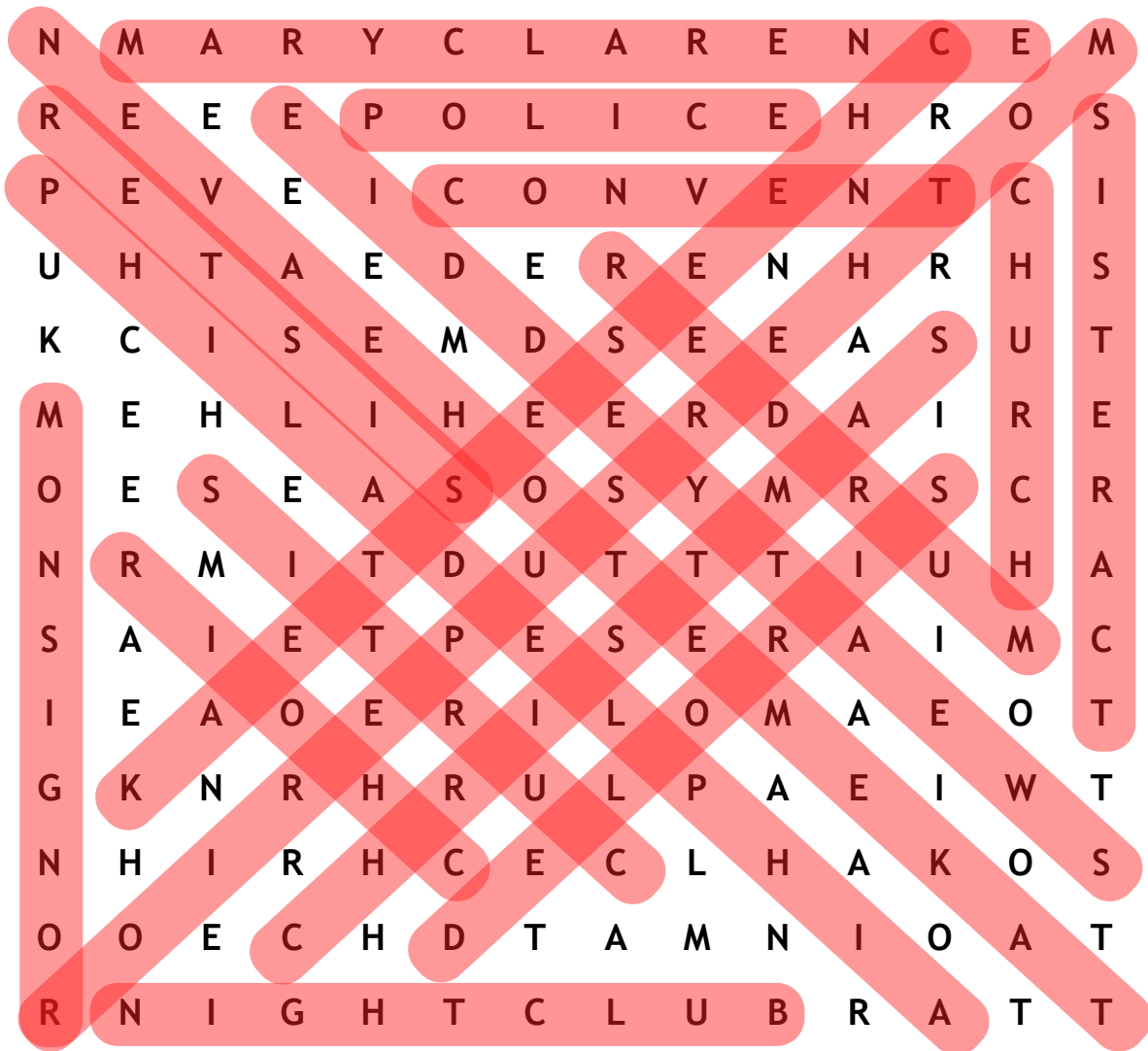
Sweaty Eddie
Convent
Mary Clarence
Sister
Philadelphia
Mother Superior

Monsignor
Cheesesteak
Church
Sister Act
Take Me To Heaven
Choir

HINT: Diagonal words go both up to down AND down to up

SISTER ACT

Word Search Key



Deloris
Nightclub
Christmas
Curtis
Murder
Police

Sweaty Eddie
Convent
Mary Clarence
Sister
Philadelphia
Mother Superior

Monsignor
Cheesesteak
Church
Sister Act
Take Me To Heaven
Choir

SISTER ACT

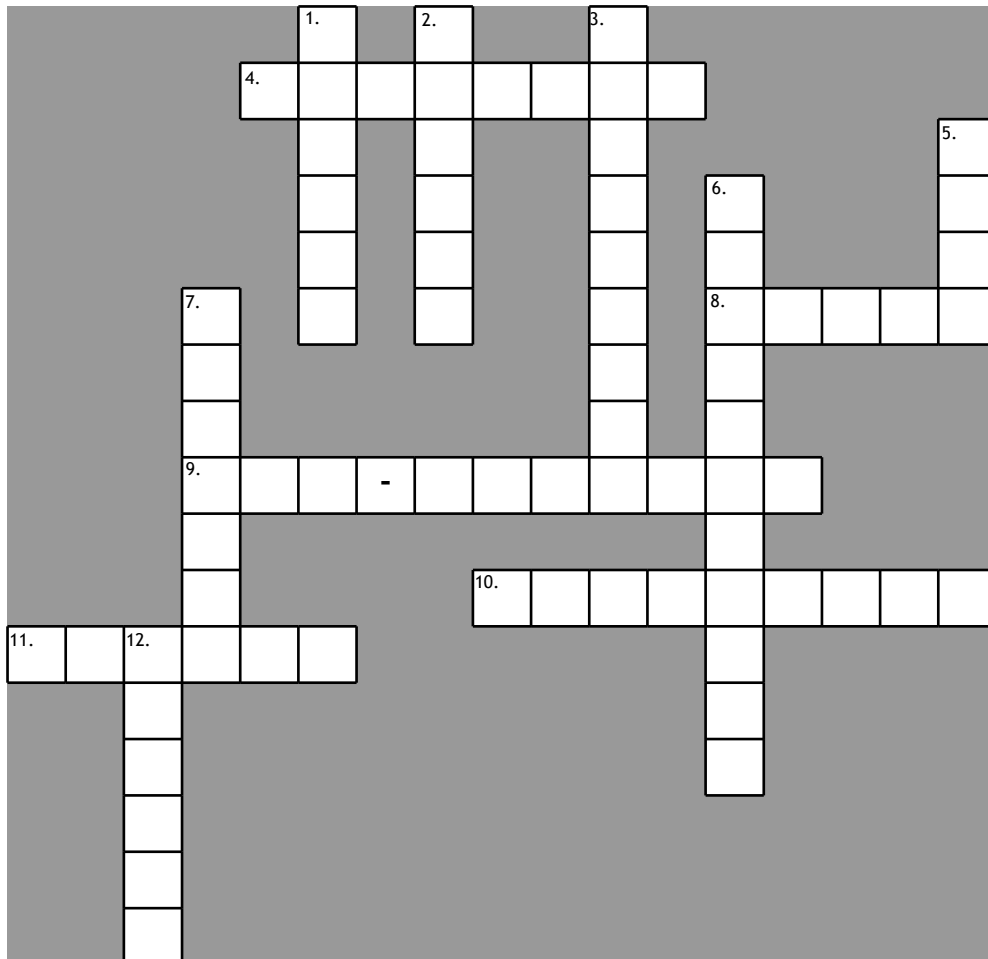
CROSSWORD

Across

4. Mother _____
8. Police Officer "Sweaty _____"
9. Deloris' last name
10. Studio 54 was one of these
11. _____ Mary Clarence

Down

1. Deloris witnesses a _____
2. "Take Me to _____"
3. Not yet an avowed nun
5. Head of the Catholic Church
6. Famous sandwich of Philadelphia
7. Where Deloris hides out
12. "_____ Morning Fever"



SISTER ACT

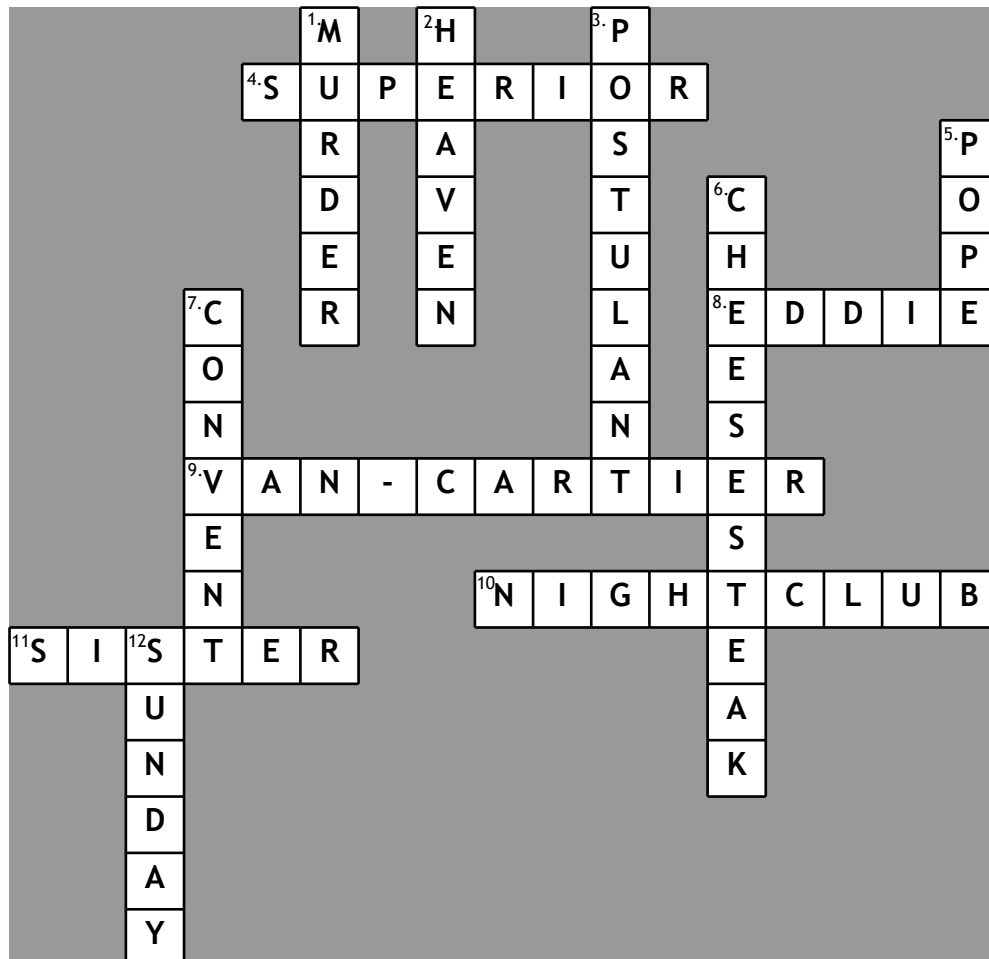
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Basic Theatre Etiquette Reminders

- Do not talk, whisper, sing or hum during the performance.
- Remain seated until the end of the show, and clap during the curtain call to say "thank you" to the performers and orchestra.
- Do not use any electronic devices during the performance. **TURN OFF** all cell phones, i-pods, cameras, etc. before the the show begins. CDT does not provide a secure location to charge devices.
- Photos may be taken prior to the show-**Photography is not permitted during the performance.** CDT encourages audience members to take photos in the lobby and post to social media before the show, during intermission and following the performance.
- Group tickets include a 15% gratuity (tip) on your included entree selection. A la carte items such as desserts, soft drinks, and beverages from the bar or purchased at your table do not include gratuity. Please be prepared to tip your server on those items. If you have questions, please ask your server.

Sources:
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