

# Monmouth's 'Turn of the Screw' is exceptional

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STAFF WRITER

MONMOUTH — Two exceptionally talented actors present a spellbinding interpretation of a classic ghost story in Theater at Monmouth's current production of "The Turn of the Screw."

Marlowe Holden plays a governess who faces eerie spectral encounters in her new appointment to care for a recently orphaned young boy and girl.

Jacob Sherburne portrays the man who hires the governess, and as the play progresses, he takes on the roles of all the other characters ... the cook at the manor house, the troubled boy, and his shy little sister. He switches between characters before our eyes, and it re-enforces the audience's mounting feeling of confusion which mirrors



Marlowe Holden

the governess's own doubts and fears about the children's ghostly encounters.

Both Holden and Sherburne are new faces on the stage at Cumston Hall. Each of them delivers a powerful performance in this remarkable two-person adaptation of



Jacob Sherburne

the haunting novella written by Henry James in 1898.

James Noel Hoban, who directed the production, said in program notes, "There is, by design, a beautifully spare theatricality to the play." His sparse setting is simply one large throne-like chair at the center of the stage, and a dark

backdrop suggesting the lonely estate at Essex.

This is Hoban's fifth season with TAM and his first summer directorial assignment.

The multiple roles played by Sherburne evoke a spine-tingling suggestion of some kind of evil. Holden's reactions to the revelations of the cook and the children who had been in her care along with previous governesses are a step-by-step descent into her tortured mind. What experience of the past is haunting the boy? Are the children really seeing ghosts, or is it in the imagination of the governess?

All of the scenes in "The Turn of the Screw" depend upon quick and effective lighting changes. The dark mood is managed masterfully by Stephen Jones, lighting director. This is Jones's second season at TAM. He is a mem-

ber of United Scenic Artists, the union of professional theatrical designers of the United States.

Playwright Jeffrey Hatcher's adaptation the Henry James story was originally workshopped and developed at Portland Stage Company's sixth annual Little Festival of the Unexpected. The show received its premiere at the Portland Stage Company in 1996.

The next opportunities to see "The Turn of the Screw" in TAM's repertory scheduling is at 7:30 pm. Saturday, July 11, at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 15, and at 1 p.m. Sunday, July 26. Other performances in August can be found online at [www.theateratmonmouth.org](http://www.theateratmonmouth.org).

Shakespeare's "The Winter's Tale," directed by TAM's producing artistic director Dawn McAndrews, can be

seen in preview Thursday evening, July, 9 and on opening night Friday, July 10. Both performances are at 7:30 p.m.

"Fallen Angels" by Noel Coward begins its repertory performances on July 16-17, followed by Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" July 23-24, and "The Real Inspector Hound" July 30-31.

TAM's family show, "The Fool of the World and the Flying Ship," in an adaptation by McAndrews, is presented at 1 p.m. each Saturday through July and on various dates in August.

Ticket prices range from \$20-\$30, and \$10 rush tickets are available for every performance to anyone under 30. Discounts are available for groups of ten or more. For calendar and reservations, contact the TAM Box Office at 833-9999 or visit [www.theateratmonmouth.org](http://www.theateratmonmouth.org).