

EVERY TRICK IN THE BOOK

COMING SOON

le jeudi 22 et vendredi 23 mars, 2018

**au Théâtre Carré Belle Feuille
60, rue de la Belle Feuille
Boulogne-Billancourt**

The year is 1951. The town of Castor City, West Virginia, sends its first draftees off to Korea to fight the Communists. At the same time the town is convulsed by a bitter labour dispute. The Swan Mining Company plans to shut down the coal mine at Castor Mountain. Hundreds of men will be made jobless. Stanley Redmond, the charismatic leader of the local branch of the National Miners Union, is leading the miners in strike action against the company. The Mayor of Castor City, alongside the Governor of West Virginia, supports the decision of the mining magnate, Samuel Swan. Together they denounce the strike and insist it is part of a wider Communist conspiracy to bring America to its knees. But in this atmosphere of tension and recrimination, things are about to get a whole lot worse...

On a wild, wet and windy October evening, a young woman is brutally gunned down in the Darkwood Forest at the edge of the town. Lyra Chandler was a much-loved Castor City native. She was also an employee of the Swan Mining Company. Almost immediately Stanley Redmond is arrested and charged with her murder. His Miners' Union cries foul and appoints renowned New York attorney, Alfredo Buffone, to defend him.

The stakes are high. The federal state has promised to root out Communist conspirators across America. Anti-Red fervour has reached fever pitch, and Castor City becomes the stage for an ideological war that is played out not only in the mountains and ridges of Korea, but also in small-town America. With Redmond's conviction looking increasingly likely, and the spectre of the electric chair looming large, Buffone engages the services of his long-time collaborator, a no-nonsense Private Eye from New York named John Book.

Book arrives in Castor City already jaded by the world of crime and corruption he fights in his native New York – the 'swamp' as he calls it. This will be his last job. Buffone and the Miners' Union have promised him a big pay-load – his ticket out of the swamp forever. But as his investigation progresses, he sinks deeper into the sludge of financial and political corruption than ever before.

As a bitter courtroom drama unfolds, Castor City takes John Book by surprise at every step. Who killed Lyra Chandler? Why does Samuel Swan want to shut down a profitable mine? What is the secret of Swan's beautiful but mysterious wife, Samantha Swan? The private detective must struggle with the FBI, with the town authorities and even with his own feelings. He will have to use every trick in the book to find answers, but as he inches closer to the truth, he learns with a shock that nothing is ever as it seems...

“Every Trick in the Book” is a homage to second-rate film-noir of the 1940s and 50s, but here in the SIS we don’t take ourselves too seriously so the play is trying to be many things at the same time – as the subtitle in the script says: it’s “a hard-boiled private eye murder-mystery courtroom thriller drama”. It’s over-acted, melodramatic and we’ve tried to create a hybrid cinema/theatre experience with a mix of live acting and projected pre-recorded film. There’s something for everybody: music, dance, drama, violence, politics, love, and plenty of clichés. Oh, and there’s also a creepy killer clown!