Welcome to American Players Theatre.

Whether destination, tradition or full-blown ritual, APT has become a summer staple for over 100,000 patrons each year. Those who flock here tell us the #1 draw is the superior quality of the work on stage. But there’s something about APT; something they can’t find elsewhere. The Hill, the trees, the stars, the connection to nature, the magic of the surrounding towns and the celebratory nature of it all combine to make APT the quintessential classical theater adventure.

APT is located on 110 wooded acres near the village of Spring Green, Wisconsin. From June through October, the Theatre produces nine plays in rotating repertory – five “Up the Hill” at the flagship 1089-seat outdoor theater and four in the intimate 201-seat indoor Touchstone Theatre.

The Spring Green area that the theater calls home is also a beautiful surprise. Geologically anomalous (thanks to a glacial near-miss) and culturally diverse, the area is at once tranquil and progressive, charming and vital. Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin is just down the road, as are a host of beguiling small towns and natural beauty in countless forms.

We hope the following information will acquaint you with this wonderful theater in the woods. Please contact us for additional information, electronic images or to set up artist interviews.

Sincerely,

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AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE’S 38TH SEASON IS UNDERWAY

Hill Theatre stage renovated over the winter will host five plays in 2017

SPRING GREEN, WIS: American Players Theatre’s (APT) 38th summer season started with a preview performance of William Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream directed by John Langs in the newly renovated Hill Theatre. Midsummer was the first play ever to be staged at the Theatre back in 1980, and is considered to be the quintessential APT experience. The company has been saving this production for the 2017 season in order to showcase it on the new Hill stage.

Also playing on the Hill this season, the hilarious French farce A Flea in Her Ear by Georges Feydeau, adapted and directed by APT’s Producing Artistic Director Emeritus, David Frank; Edmond Rostand’s swashbuckling romance Cyrano de Bergerac, adapted and directed by APT core company member James DeVita; Anton Chekhov’s masterpiece Three Sisters, directed by long-time APT artist William Brown and adapted by Susan Coyne; and a second Shakespearean play, Pericles, Prince of Tyre, directed by first-time APT director, and Artistic Director of Bedlam Theatre in New York, Eric Tucker.

The 200-seat, indoor Touchstone Theatre will host Yasmina Reza’s The Unexpected Man, translated by Christopher Hampton and directed by Laura Gordon; Jean Genet’s The Maids, directed by Gigi Buffington and translated by Bernard Frechtman; and Arthur Miller’s A View From the Bridge, directed by Tim Ocel. August Strindberg’s Creditors, directed by Maria Aitken, will comprise the 2017 shoulder season in the Touchstone, November 1 – 20.

Tickets to the 2017 season are on sale now, and some performances have limited availability. Patrons can order by phone at 608-588-2361, or online at americanplayers.org.
A New Stage
2017 is shaping up to be a momentous year for the company, which completely tore down and rebuilt the flagship stage on the Hill over the winter. The stage walls were rebuilt and reinforced with steel to ensure longevity and safety. Also included in the redesign are features such as: hand railings in the theater; a loop system to improve assistive listening for patrons; improved acoustics through adjusting stage walls and adding acoustic walls; improved sightlines by moving some aisles and select seats; added trapped areas to the stage (parts of the stage floor that can be removed to accommodate scenic elements); added a shuttle shelter; built a family restroom; increased covered areas in the lobby for inclement weather; re-graded and surfaced the lobby so it is entirely ADA accessible; added three new rehearsal studios and much more.

Artistic Director Brenda DeVita said of the project, “We love this theater. It is the foundation and the heart of APT. So we planned this construction within an inch of our lives, because we want it to be that same theater that we’ve loved so much for so many years - only better. And I think that’s what we’ve done. This new stage will still hold great artists telling great stories, beneath that wide, starry sky. But some of those stories couldn’t have been told on the old stage because it literally couldn’t hold the scenery we needed. Plus, it will be just a little easier to see and hear. And any barriers we can remove between the audience and the play is a great thing, right? It’s all incredibly exciting, and we can’t wait to get it in front of an audience.”

The campaign to rebuild the Hill Theatre, titled the Next Great Stage Campaign, began in 2015 and sought to raise $8 million. The campaign is still underway, with about $100,000 to go to reach the goal as of June 5, 2017. For more information call APT Development at 608-588-9209, or visit the website at americanplayers.org/support/the-next-great-stage-campaign.

A Busy Pre-Season
2017 tickets went on sale March 13, and quickly took off. Ticket sales are up over 2016, and several performances have been added to accommodate demand, including one performance each of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *A Flea in Her Ear* and *Cyrano de Bergerac* on the Hill, as well as six performances of *A View From the Bridge* and two performances of *The Unexpected Man* in the Touchstone Theatre.

Great seats remain for all the plays. Patrons can call the APT Box Office at 608-588-2361 for best availability.
The 2017 Season, June 10 – November 21, 2017

ON THE HILL
A Midsummer Night’s Dream
By William Shakespeare
Directed by John Langs
First performance June 10. Opening night June 17.
What better way to christen our new stage than with the quintessential APT experience? An iconic fairy tale, spun by our players in the moonlight. *Midsummer* is a magical, heart-filling journey. See it on our enchanted woods, on a gossamer evening.
*Featuring: Tracy Michelle Arnold, Nate Burger, Tim Gittings, Casey Hoekstra, Chiké Johnson, Gavin Lawrence, Colleen Madden, Cristina Panfilio, Melisa Pereyra, John Pribyl, Laura Rook & Jonathan Smoots*

A Flea in Her Ear
By Georges Feydeau
Adapted by David Frank
Translated by Abbot Chrisman
Directed by David Frank
The funniest French confection ever to frost a stage, offering characters with no impulse control running a gauntlet of glorious temptation. This bevy of bourgeoisie is secretly dying to let down their guard (and their garters). Consider this your invitation to join the melee.
*Featuring: Tracy Michelle Arnold, Kelsey Brennan, Nate Burger, David Daniel, Gavin Lawrence, Colleen Madden, Cristina Panfilio, John Taylor Phillips, John Pribyl, Jonathan Smoots & Marcus Truschinski*

Cyrano de Bergerac
By Edmond Rostand
Adapted by James DeVita from the texts translated by: Gertrude Hall; Gladys Thomas and Mary Guillenard; Charles Renauld; and Henderson Dangerfield Norman.
Directed by James DeVita
First performance June 23. Opening night July 1.
Embark on this glorious romance, swept through with beauty, wit and heart-stopping action. All supplied with panache by our iconic Cyrano – a gallant who lives life full-tilt, parrying foes with both swordplay and wordplay. A night of theater this perfect is something to be celebrated; a breathtaking love letter addressed to us all.
*Featuring: Kelsey Brennan, David Daniel, Sarah Day, Chiké Johnson, Colleen Madden, Brian Mani, Danny Martinez, John Taylor Phillips, James Ridge, Laura Rook & Marcus Truschinski*
Three Sisters  
By Anton Chekhov  
Translated by Susan Coyne  
Directed by William Brown  
First performance August 4. Opening night August 12.  
For three women lingering in the past and on the edge, fortune lives in the everyday. They infuse their habitat and their hearts with homespun beauty; rich in both love and in hope. Immerse in this emotional masterpiece, forged in exquisite moments of humor and humanity.  

Pericles, Prince of Tyre  
By William Shakespeare  
Directed by Eric Tucker  
First performance August 11. Opening night August 18.  
Pericles’ tale is nothing short of epic, as he battles storms, pirates and traitorous kings with equal flair. This is, after all, an adventure story, and adventure is always built on a bed of hope. Why else would we ever set sail? Funny and heartfelt with a healthy dose of danger; a Shakespearean specialty not to be missed.  
Featuring: Cher Desiree Alvarez, Tracy Michelle Arnold, David Daniel, Gavin Lawrence, Juan Rivera Lebron, Cristina Panfilio, Cage Sebastian Pierre, James Ridge, Andrea San Miguel & Marcus Truschinski.

IN THE TOUCHSTONE THEATRE  
The Unexpected Man  
By Yasmina Reza  
Translated by Christopher Hampton  
Directed by Laura Gordon  
Two strangers, united by book and by chance. They don’t know it, but they’re hurtling toward a crossroad; a choice. To leap into a vibrant new chapter, or sit back and let the future fade. This riveting duo infuses their shared train car with crackling anticipation. You can’t help but be swept away on this witty and surprisingly suspenseful ride.  
Featuring Sarah Day & Brian Mani.

The Maids  
By Jean Genet  
Translated by Bernard Frechtman  
Directed by Gigi Buffington  
First performance June 27. Opens July 1.  
When the line between who you are and who you can never be is stretched thin, reality becomes a story you write yourself. It’s not a pretty story, though there is beauty. Not a story that’s sexy, though there is sex. It’s a mesmerizing and provocative world, defined by Class and by Other. Take a chance, and peer into their fractured looking glass.  
Featuring: Rebecca Hurd, Melisa Pereyra & Andrea San Miguel.
A View from the Bridge
By Arthur Miller
Directed by Tim Ocel
In a community entrenched in honor and iron wills, secrets have a way of exploding. It’s an uneasy venue for a patchwork family; for a world-weary longshoreman who feels his strength slipping, inch by treacherous inch. A man who discovers, too late, that the most dangerous enemy is the one that comes from within. A true thriller with life and death stakes, disguised as an American Classic. 
Featuring: Jim DeVita, Tim Gittings, Casey Hoekstra, Colleen Madden, Brian Mani, Will Mobley & Melisa Pereyra.

Opening in November
Creditors
By August Strindberg
Translated by David Greig
Directed by Maria Aitken
A seemingly solid relationship suddenly teeters, attacked from without and within. Doubt can be an insidious poison, and that doubles down why you’re talking about marriage. Because sometime a question surfaces: Am I enough? And what if a stranger is answering the question for you? A riveting psychological thriller to close the season. 
Featuring: Tracy Michelle Arnold, Jim DeVita & Marcus Truschinski.

About the Theatre
APT is a professional repertory theater devoted to the great and future classics. It was founded in 1979 and continues to be one of the most popular outdoor classical theaters in the nation.

The Theatre is located in Spring Green, Wis., on 110 acres of hilly woods and meadows above the Wisconsin River. The outdoor amphitheater is built within a natural hollow atop an oak-wooded hill. Under the dome of sky, 1,089 comfortably cushioned seats encircle three sides of the stage. In 2009, APT opened the 201-seat indoor Touchstone Theatre, offering a different type of play and experience.

For more information, visit www.americanplayers.org
For photos or interviews, please contact: Jess Amend, 608-588-9240, jamend@americanplayers.org

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images available upon request

AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE’S NEXT GREAT STAGE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN
Renovation of the Hill Theatre has been successfully completed; $100,000 remains before reaching $8 million fundraising goal

Spring Green, WI (2016) – American Players Theatre’s (APT) has successfully completed the construction of the flagship Hill Theatre after seven months of work. Construction began the day after the Hill season ended on October 2, 2016. Apart from some minor aesthetic points, construction was completed on May 5, 2017, just the week before the company started rehearsals on May 9.

The stage was last rebuilt in 1995, and though it had been mended repeatedly, it had become apparent that the stage itself was approaching the end of its functional life. In conjunction with architects, engineers, APT staff and the Board of Directors, the company concluded that, for safety, usability, and continued endurance, APT’s outdoor stage must be completely rebuilt by 2017.

Artistic Director Brenda DeVita said of the project, “I don’t think we ever would have changed this stage if we didn’t have to. But everything changes, right? And what we’re talking about here is making the stage stronger and more flexible and more capable of doing the things we want it to do. And what we love about this place, what makes it feel like APT, it’s all still there. We are ecstatic about our new home, and the new facilities make artists and crew and audiences all feel cared for in a way that is really extraordinary.”

Included in the renovation were improvements to the lobby, rehearsal and dressing areas and the stage itself, including: rebuilding the stage and stage walls, and reinforcing them with steel; adding trapped areas to the stage (parts of the stage floor that can be removed to accommodate scenic elements); improving infrastructure and equipment for stage lighting; enhancing berms and plantings to create additional acting areas around the stage; adding hand railings in the theater; adding a loop system to improve assistive listening for patrons; improving acoustics by adjusting stage walls and other surfaces around the theater; improving sightlines by moving some aisles and select seats; adding a shuttle shelter in the lobby; building a family restroom; increasing covered areas in the lobby for inclement weather; changing the grade and surface so it is entirely ADA accessible; tripling the scenery storage area for the current season’s plays; adding work spaces to increase efficiency for crew members; expanding and remodeling the dressing rooms, doubling the size of the current dressing room and increasing the number of dressing bays from 34 to 45; expanding restroom and shower facilities and move into the dressing room building, renovate current restroom facilities into a laundry/wardrobe room; and building three new rehearsal studios, which provides each production a dedicated rehearsal space.
The Next Great Stage

APT is grateful to the building partners that helped make this project a success, including: Michael Ganio, Stage Designer; Strang, Inc., Architectural Design and Engineering; Kraemer Brothers, LLC, General Contractor; Schuler Shook; Theatre Consultant; Talaske | Sound Thinking, Acoustic and Audio Consultant; Saiki Design, Inc., Landscape Architects; Westbrook Associated Engineers, Inc., Structural and Civil Engineering.

Fundraising Nearly Complete
“The Next Great Stage” campaign now enters its final stretch, seeking funds to finalize payment for the Hill stage construction and renovation of the backstage and lobby areas in the flagship outdoor Hill Theatre. The public phase of the Next Great Stage campaign began in 2015, and 99% of the $8 million goal has been raised.

Managing Director Carrie Van Hallgren said: “Support for this effort has been extraordinary. More than 1,500 individuals and businesses contributed to this project; an unprecedented accomplishment in the history of APT. We could not be more grateful to our donors for their faith in this project, and their passion this work. I am confident that we will reach our fundraising goal by the end of our season and turn our focus to creating art that utilizes these improvements to their full extent.”

More information is available at americanplayers.org/nextgreatstage.

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A Brief History of American Players Theatre

In 1978, a small group gathered on the Lockwood farm near Spring Green, Wisconsin. One person walked to the base of a steep hill and began to read; his voice reached those above with uncanny clarity. After looking at 43 sites, this was the one. The founders, Randall Duk Kim, Anne Occhiogrosso and Charles Bright, had found the spot that was to become American Players Theatre. The mission was to perform the classics, especially the works of Shakespeare, outside, under the sun, moon and stars. On July 18, 1980, American Players Theatre staged its first production: William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

If building a theater in a remote community is a challenge, developing and sustaining an audience was even more daunting. But word spread quickly about this very special venue and the quality of the work. By its second season, the stage was home to a mix of five Shakespearian comedies, histories and tragedies. Since then, the company has performed a steady mix of the greatest works ever written for the stage, especially Shakespeare, plus works by such luminaries as Ibsen, Shaw, Wilde, O'Neill, Williams, Sophocles, Miller, Stoppard and Wilder. From 1990 – 2006, the company also toured the state of Wisconsin following its summer season in Spring Green.

Through the years, the theater’s facilities have undergone a continuous series of upgrades. The amphitheater and seating were replaced in 2000 and in 2001 the 22,000 square foot Bravo Center was built, with rehearsal halls, production shops and administrative offices. In 2009, APT added the 200-seat indoor Touchstone Theatre, which allowed the opportunity to extend the season and expand the dramaturgy. And APT just finished its biggest construction project to date: a complete $8 million renovation of the stage, backstage and lobby at the flagship outdoor Hill Theatre (more information at americanplayers.org/nextgreatstage).

Leadership has been remarkably stable at APT. Since the founders moved on from the company in 1990, the theater has had only two artistic directors and two managing directors. Sheldon Wilner was Managing Director from 1988 to 2005 and David Frank was Artistic Director from 1991 to 2005 and Producing Artistic Director from 2005 to 2014 (he is now Artistic Director Emeritus). In January of 2014, APT’s Board of Directors appointed Brenda DeVita as Artistic Director. Ms. DeVita has been with the company since 1995, and has played many roles, including Events Planner, Company Manager and Associate Artistic Director. In January of 2015, Carrie Van Hallgren was named Managing Director, returning APT to a dual-leadership structure.

Today, American Players Theatre draws an annual audience of more than 110,000 people from around the country and has earned a national reputation for presenting theater of the highest quality.

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Wisconsin’s Premier Art and Nature Destination
Spring Green, WI’s unique travel destination boasts nationally acclaimed American Players Theatre, Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin and nearby Cave of the Mounds

Spring Green, WI: American Players Theatre (APT), a popular outdoor venue named “the best classical theater company in America” by The Wall Street Journal in 2011, is not the only tourist destination that calls scenic Spring Green, WI, home. While this tiny village of just over 1,400 people welcomes more than 100,000 visitors annually for shows at APT, the surrounding Wisconsin River Valley area provides a plethora of additional art and nature offerings, including: Frank Lloyd Wright’s heralded former home and workshop, Taliesin; the eclectic House on the Rock; Cave of the Mounds, the upper Midwest’s premier show cave; and multiple Wisconsin state parks such as Governor Dodge State Park, Tower Hill State Park and Avoca Prairie. Spring Green is located in Southwest Wisconsin, just 40 miles from Madison, a 2.5-hour drive from Milwaukee, 3.5-hour drive from Chicago, 4-hour drive from Des Moines, and 5 hours from the Twin Cities. For more information, visit www.springgreen.com.

A sampling of the tourist offerings in Spring Green, WI:

American Players Theatre
Located on 110 acres of hilly woods and meadows above the Wisconsin River, American Players Theatre (5950 Golf Course Rd, Spring Green, WI. Box Office: 608-588-2361) was founded in 1979 and continues to be one of the most popular outdoor classical theaters in the nation. This season, APT presents a diverse lineup of nine contemporary and classical plays that feature William Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream and Pericles, Prince of Tyre; Edmond Rostand’s Cyrano de Bergerac; Georges Feydeau’s A Flea in Her Ear; and Anton Chekhov’s Three Sisters in APT’s flagship 1089-seat outdoor amphitheater on the Hill. Playing in APT’s intimate 201-seat Touchstone Theatre are Yasmina Reza’s The Unexpected Man, Jean Genet’s The Maids, Arthur Miller’s A View From the Bridge, and opening in November, August Strindberg’s Creditors. Tickets are on sale now, and single tickets for APT’s 2017 Season start at $49. For more information on ticket prices, schedules, plays and casting, call the APT Box Office at 608-588-2361, or visit www.americanplayers.org.

Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin
Taliesin (5607 County Rd. C, Spring Green, WI) was Frank Lloyd Wright’s home, workshop and architectural laboratory for 48 years (1911-1959). Nestled on the brow of a hill near Spring Green, it commands a sweeping view of the valley settled by Wright’s Welsh ancestors in the mid-1800s. Architects, historians and architecture critics alike have praised Taliesin as a masterwork and a triumph of design. Robert Campbell, Pulitzer Prize-winning architecture critic, called it the “greatest single building in America.” In 1976 Taliesin was designated a National Historic Landmark, the highest honor bestowed on historic properties by the federal government. This year, Taliesin Preservation will celebrate Frank Lloyd Wright’s 150th birthday in various ways throughout the summer, along with a variety of tours of the Taliesin Estate available from May 1 through October 31. Reservations are recommended; call 877-588-7900 or email tours@taliesinpreservation.org.
The House on the Rock
One of the area's most unique architectural marvels is The House on the Rock (5754 Hwy. 23, Spring Green, WI, 608-935-3639). Begun in the 1940s, the House on the Rock features an extraordinary complex of rooms, streets, buildings and gardens covering more than 200 acres. Originally built as a weekend retreat, The House on the Rock is a trip through the wild and fantastic imagination of designer Alex Jordan. Tours of the full property are available from March through November, with limited tours available year-round. More information is available at www.thehouseontherock.com.

Outdoor adventures and state parks
Located just 30 minutes outside Spring Green, Cave of the Mounds (2975 Cave of the Mounds Rd. Blue Mounds, WI 53517) a major national landmark, is the upper Midwest's premier show cave featuring one-hour guided tours through a collection of colorful stalactites, stalagmites, columns, and other formations. Other area nature preserves include: Governor Dodge State Park (4175 Hwy 23 North, Dodgeville, WI, 608-935-2315), one of Wisconsin's largest state parks, with 5,270 scenic acres of steep hills, bluffs, and deep valleys, plus two lakes and a waterfall; Tower Hill State Park (5808 County Hwy. C, Spring Green, WI, 608-588-2116), featuring campsites, hiking trails, a canoe landing and picnic areas; Avoca Prairie, the largest tallgrass prairie east of the Mississippi (located in the Avoca Unit of the Riverway, seven miles west of the Lone Rock Bridge on Hwy. 133); and Ferry Bluff, which provides a spectacular and historical view of the river and surrounding topography (located off of Highway 60, four miles southwest of Sauk City)—on a clear day you can spot the highest point in southern Wisconsin, Blue Mound, thirteen miles to the south. For those who like outdoor activity at a leisurely pace, the Lower Wisconsin River has no rapids or falls and a current ranging from just 3-5 miles per hour, making it ideal for recreational canoeists. A number of Spring Green-area businesses rent canoes, including Wisconsin Riverside Resort (S13220 Shifflet Road, Spring Green, 608-588-2826). The Riverway is home to more than 45 species of mammals and nearly 300 bird species, including 23 different waterfowl. River otters, beaver, mink, muskrat, raccoon and many other mammals thrive here, sharing the lush bottomlands with bald eagles, herons, sandhill cranes, pilated woodpeckers, woodcock and osprey.

Eclectic shopping and dining
- Bird of Paradise Tea / No Rules Gallery (608-588-7509. www.gallerytea.com)
- The Frank Lloyd Wright Visitor Center (608-588-7900, www.taliesinpreservation.com)
- The Spring Green General Store (608-588-7070. www.springgreengeneralstore.com)
- Wisconsin Riverside Resort Camping, Bar & Grille (608-588-2826, https://www.wiriverside.com/)

For additional information about Spring Green attractions, shopping and dining, visit www.springgreen.com.

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