



AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE

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AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2023 Season

SPRING GREEN, WIS: American Players Theatre (APT) is thrilled to announce its 2023 lineup, to run June 10 – November 19. The Hill Theatre will open with one of Shakespeare's most beloved comedies, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and the season's other Shakespeare play will be *Romeo & Juliet* featuring Shakespeares words performed in a mix of spoken English and American Sign Language. Also playing on the Hill, David Ives' comedy *The Liar*, Thornton Wilder's great American classic *Our Town* and Anton's *Shorts* – a series of early one-act comedies by Anton Chekhov, adapted by award winning playwright Aaron Posner.

Next season in the Touchstone Theatre offers four productions never seen before on APT's stages: *Once Upon a Bridge* by Sonya Kelley, *The Royale* by Marco Ramirez and *Mala* by Melinda Lopez. Finally, playing late October through November in the Touchstone shoulder season, David Auburn's *Proof*, directed by Artistic Director Brenda DeVita.

Artistic Director Brenda DeVita said, "I really feel that the 2022 season was a blessing, even though it had more ups and downs than were typical pre-COVID. We were able to return to our rotating repertory structure, which meant a return to those stunning, large-cast, gorgeously appointed plays. And we were able to perform them in front of very full houses. It was all such an unbelievable gift to see all those faces back in the audience. It truly felt like a family reunion. And as we move into planning for next season, we're taking that family feeling along with us. And I'm not saying it's a theme – we don't do themes – but the stories we'll be telling next year are about community, and taking care of one another. And how that sometimes doesn't look how you'd think it would. We're incredibly excited to bring back two great, beloved Shakespeares, one of which will feature actors who are deaf, sharing Shakespeare's poetry through sign language. Of course, we have a great American classic, *Our Town*, coming back to the hill for the first time in 30 years, as well as a hilarious farce, which our company will just devour. And a piece newly adapted from Chekhov's work, and partly created from whole cloth by Aaron Posner, who is a genius. And in the Touchstone,

Tickets are now on sale for returning patron. General public on-sale will be April 24. More information at americanplayers.org.

The 2023 Plays

In the Hill Theatre

The Merry Wives of Windsor

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Terri McMahan

When the infamous Sir John Falstaff arrives in Windsor, he immediately decides his path to riches lies in finding a wealthy woman to woo. So he sets about writing identical love letters to

two married ladies about town – Mesdames Ford and Page. Though the letters fail to have the intended effect, the ladies find them an excellent inlet to toy with Falstaff, resulting in a funny and energetic exploration of marriage, miscommunication and forgiveness, featuring charming characters and shenanigans to spare.

The Liar

By David Ives

Adapted from Les Menteur by Pierre Corneille

Directed by Keira Fromm

Ridiculous situations abound in this warm and hilarious adaptation of Corneille's famous farce. Charming Dorante is a shameless liar, and he's just arrived in Paris with good times on his mind. He very quickly falls in love with a local lady, Clarice, who he has mistaken for her best friend, Lucrece. Further complicating matters is that, unbeknownst to Dorante, Clarice is already engaged - to his childhood friend, Alcippe. Throw in a servant who cannot tell a lie, and a father who is anxious to marry off his wayward son, and you've got the type of uproarious comedies that APT does best.

Romeo & Juliet

By William Shakespeare

Directed by John Langs

In this gorgeous new production originated at ACT Theatre in Seattle, American Sign Language is seamlessly united with Shakespeare's sweeping poetry. The story is one you likely know - the feuding Montague and Capulet clans come crashing together when the star-crossed Romeo and Juliet fall utterly in love, even though, in this case, they speak different languages. As characters speak their truths with their whole hearts, a chorus of actors speaks along with the signing in this lush, full-hearted imagining of one of the greatest tragedies ever written

Our Town

By Thornton Wilder

Directed by Tim Ocel

Wilder's Pulitzer-Prize winning classic returns to the Hill Theatre for the first time since 1992. That little town of Grover's Corners contains multitudes. Centered around George and Emily, a young couple in love, the story of their lives together evolves as the acts carry on, intertwined with the story of the town itself, the narrative stewarded by an all-knowing stage manager. A timeless tale that gently reminds us about the importance of appreciating the life we have, and the people with whom we share it.

Anton's Shorts

Brief Plays & Vaudevilles by the Young Anton Chekhov

Freely adapted for the stage by Aaron Posner

Directed by Jake Penner

Sometimes, Russian comedy isn't so much comedy in the traditional sense (just ask anyone who's seen *The Seagull*). That said, Anton Chekhov had a phase in his youth where everything seemed very funny indeed – even when the topics are serious ones: the complexities of love and life; of marriage and moving on. Adapted by award-winning playwright and regular stage director at APT, Aaron Posner, who weaves the pieces together with an original work of fiction featuring Chekhov himself.

In the Touchstone Theatre

Once Upon a Bridge

By Sonya Kelly

Directed by Laura Rook

Based on a true story, three lives intersect for an instant, and are changed forever. A young woman starting out in a new city is bumped – or is she pushed? – or did she fall? – into the path of an oncoming bus, her life spared by bare inches. One man hustles off, while another risks his

job to stay. Structured as a series of flowing monologues, these strangers tell a tale of the distance between our hopes and realities; our perceived futures and unchangeable past; between ourselves and the people around us. A poetic and hopeful meditation about choices, consequences and picking up the pieces when they fall.

The Royale

By Marco Ramirez

Directed by Tyrone Phillips

In the early 1900s, Jay Jackson, known in boxing circles as “The Sport,” is primed to become the first Black heavyweight champion of the world. It’s an opportunity to open doors for himself, and all the potential prize-fighters who come after him - most immediately, his young could-be protégé, Fish. But what is the price of bringing those barriers down? And who is reaping the rewards of his sacrifice? What do his accomplishments mean to those who come after, and what do they mean to the safety of his family in an intolerant time? A graceful, theatrical play about boxing, without a single punch thrown.

Mala

By Melinda Lopez

Directed by Rosa Joshi

Mala is doing her very best to be a dutiful child without losing her cool (or her mind), while caring for her stubborn, aging mother. Her story offers a heartfelt exploration of the maddening, devastating and darkly hilarious events that surround caring for a parent heading toward the end of life. As Mala shares her own experiences, and the experiences of her friends in similar situations, she bounds between comedy and deeply poignant emotion, creating an event custom-made for anyone who’s struggled to be perfectly patient with someone they love. A tour-de-force featuring the extraordinary talents of Nancy Rodriguez.

Opening in October

Proof

By David Auburn

Directed by Brenda DeVita

Catherine has lived alone with her father, who had once been a world-renowned mathematician, in order to care for him during a period of mental decline. But the nature of their conversations is starting to cause her to fear that she may share more with her father than a love of numbers. Complicating this is one of her father’s former students, Hal, combing through his journals for something of value, while anxiously wondering if his own best days are behind him at 28. And Catherine’s sister, Claire, who only wants the best for Catherine, though her motives may not be entirely unselfish. A poignant and surprisingly funny look at what we’re willing to sacrifice for those we love – and what we’re not. Contains adult themes and language.

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

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