



AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE

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AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2025 Season

To Run June – November in the Outdoor Hill Theatre and Indoor Touchstone Theatre

SPRING GREEN, WIS: American Players Theatre (APT) is thrilled to announce its 2025 lineup, to run June through October, with the shoulder season production opening in late October. **The Hill Theatre** will open with the play that seems specially crafted for APT's Hill Stage, William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Core Company Actor David Daniel. Next up on the Hill Stage, famous wit Noël Coward's *Fallen Angels*, followed by William Inge's American Classic, *Picnic*. Rounding out the Hill Season will be Nilo Cruz's award-winning homage to *Anna Karenina*, *Anna in the Tropics*, and Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, a little-produced play that hasn't been on APT's stage since 2009.

Next season in the **Touchstone Theatre** offers four productions never seen before on APT's stages, including a **world premiere by Core Company Member Gavin Dillon Lawrence: *The Death of Chuck Brown***. Also on stage in the Touchstone, Yasmina Reza's barbed comedy *Art* and Nina Raine's family dramedy, *Tribes*. Fall in the Touchstone will see a very special production of the raucous comedy thriller *The 39 Steps* by Patrick Barlow.

Artistic Director Brenda DeVita said, "First, I'd just like to say that I'm so proud of the season we produced this year. Our 45th season. The work was exquisite from beginning to end, and I'm so grateful to our artists and actors, and the staff that takes such great care of our amazing audience. An audience who comes to these shows, whether or not they're familiar with the story, and puts their trust in us, and in the art we make here. It's incredible the community that's been created out here, in the middle of Wisconsin farmland – it consistently fills my heart and blows my mind.

This season has felt like a huge step in our growth as an organization. The company is gelling and maturing, which gives us confidence that the work we do here is special, and important, as well as being beautiful and engaging. We carry that confidence with us into 2025, when we will invite some exciting and new-to-us directors – especially female directors, the most we've ever had directing in a season – to work at APT for the first time. Shannon Cochran, who is an actor and director, will do Noël Coward's *Fallen Angels*, a playwright she is very familiar with, and can deftly play with that wit and language. Shana Cooper, the talented director who created that indelible, creative production of *The Taming of the Shrew* at APT in 2021 will return to direct *The Winter's Tale*.

And additionally, we continue to expand and grow the talents of our company. David Daniel, a member of the Core Company, and our education director, who directed *Oedipus* for us in 2021, will direct this *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Gavin Lawrence, another Core Company member –

he directed *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* for us this season – will direct a play he has written – *The Death of Chuck Brown*. And John Taylor Phillips who you've seen on stage at APT in *Private Lives* and *Born Yesterday* and many other plays, will be back to direct *The 39 Steps*. And we have a number of wonderful returning directors – John Langs on *Tribes*, Robert Ramirez on *Anna in the Tropics*, I'll be directing *Picnic*, which has been a dream project of mine. We're already getting started, and I believe it's a lineup that fits our foundation, while allowing the organization to continue to grow and evolve."

The 2025 schedule will be available in January, and tickets will go on sale to returning patrons in March. More information at americanplayers.org.

The 2025 Plays

In the Hill Theatre

A Midsummer Night's Dream

By William Shakespeare

Directed by David Daniel

Love weaves a tangled web in this iconic Shakespearean fairy tale. Hermia and her beloved Lysander flee into the forest to avoid Hermia's arranged marriage to Demetrius. They're pursued by Demetrius himself, along with Helena, who is, in turn, in love with Demetrius. In that same forest, Oberon and Titania – king and queen of the fairies – are having a quarrel of their own. And when Oberon enlists his accomplice Puck, aka Robin Goodfellow to throw some magic into the mix, everyone - including a hilarious group of "rude mechanicals" led by Nick Bottom – gets caught up in the spell.

Fallen Angels

By Noël Coward

Directed by Shannon Cochran

Noël Coward's sparkling wit returns to the Hill for the first time since 2015. Jane and Julia are happily married to charming men when a message arrives from a former flame, sending their perfect lives into a tizzy. It appears a man with whom they'd each had a passionate tryst in the past is planning a visit, and they are both questioning whether they can – or want to – withstand his charms. As the husbands golf, the ladies plot and plan over copious glasses of champagne, with some "help" from a very worldly housekeeper, while awaiting the arrival of their former lover in this decadent and utterly entertaining comedy. *Contains adult themes*

Picnic

By William Inge

Directed by Brenda DeVita

It's almost time for the annual Labor Day picnic in Independence, Kansas. But the town buzz is all about Hal – the young handyman hired by sweet Helen Potts. Her neighbor, Flo, is less than enthusiastic about having Hal in the vicinity of her daughters, Madge and Millie. When it turns out Madge's steady guy, the steadfast Alan, is an old friend of Hal's, Flo relents, and plans are made for Hal to stick around town more permanently. But young love may have other ideas, and hearts will be filled and broken in this play about desire, expectations and the sacrifices and settlements people make when it comes to love. *Contains adult themes & language*

Anna in the Tropics

By Nilo Cruz

Directed by Robert Ramirez

In the heat of Florida, a Cuban-American family spends long days rolling cigars for a factory. They carried with them many traditions from Cuba, including employing a lector to read to them as they work. But with automation on the rise, money is tight, and there are differing opinions on

whether that tradition should continue. Still, matriarch Ofelia hires a new lector, Juan Julián – a charismatic young man who captures the attention of her daughters, Marela and Conchita. Juan Julián begins his reading sessions with *Anna Karenina*. As the book's story unfolds, the family's lives run parallel, bringing secrets and lies to the forefront and threatening their livelihood and relationships. *Contains adult themes*

The Winter's Tale

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Shana Cooper

Shakespeare's sweet and complex romance returns to the Hill. When King Leontes suspects his pregnant wife Hermione of having an affair with his good friend Polixenes, he jealously hides Hermione away in the palace. He has become so enraged that Leontes orders their infant daughter to be abandoned in the wild, leading Hermione to die of a broken heart. But all may not be as dire as it first appears, as a shepherd saves the young girl to be raised as a shepherdess, with help from a pair of ridiculous clowns, setting in motion a series of events that opens up paths to forgiveness, love and redemption.

In the Touchstone Theatre

The World Premiere of

The Death of Chuck Brown

By Gavin Dillon Lawrence

Directed by Gavin Dillon Lawrence

A local icon's death signals the end of an era and the beginning of a new look for a once-predominantly African American neighborhood in Washington, DC. A barbershop is the backdrop for conversations about gentrification, race and family as the owner, Kofi, considers selling his beloved establishment while keeping his son Prince on the path to success. A funny, touching and devastating world-premiere from APT Core Company Member Gavin Dillon Lawrence. *Contains adult themes & language*

Art

By Yasmina Reza

Director TBA

Reza's philosophical comedy comes to APT at last. Three long-time friends – Serge, Marc and Yvan – ponder art, class and love; fraught and funny discussions sparked by Serge's extravagant purchase of a painting that is simply a white canvas with a few thin lines. As the conversation progresses, cracks form in the men's relationships as they question whether they are who they think they are, or if they are who their friends think they are, in a play that has been awarded the Tony, New York Drama Critics' Circle, and Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. *Contains adult themes & language*

Tribes

By Nina Raine

Directed by John Langs

There is the family we choose, and the one we're born to. And neither are perfect. When Billy, Ruth and Daniel - Beth and Christopher's adult children – all move home, the rivalry is intense among this group of "creatives." But not for Billy, who is the sole deaf member of this hearing family. The family made the decision long ago that Billy should not learn sign language, and instead learn to read lips. But when he meets Sylvia, who comes from a deaf family and is coping with losing her own hearing, Billy's world opens up as she teaches him to sign. What his family makes of this new world is another thing entirely, as they try to elevate themselves while holding Billy at status quo in this funny, biting play. *Contains adult themes & language*

Opening in October

The 39 Steps

By Patrick Barlow

Directed by John Taylor Phillips

Richard Hannay's adult life has taken a decided turn for the boring, when one night he decides to go to the theater. There he meets a mysterious woman (and a couple of clowns) during a performance by Mr. Memory. When shots are fired, Hannay finds himself hurtling toward a hilarious adventure built from a foundation of all the most famous noir, and into a delightful parody of the genre itself. A theatrical and hilarious send up of Hitchcockian thrillers, with four actors playing every character – a special event perfect for fall in the Touchstone Theatre.

Now Playing

Nat Turner in Jerusalem

By Nathan Alan Davis

Directed by Tyrone Phillips

Playing through November 10 in the Touchstone Theatre

Tickets at americanplayers.org/tickets

When everything has been ripped away – family, autonomy, dignity – all that's left is faith and free will. And if a chance arises to take those things back? No weapon would be off limits. Nat Turner's life hangs in the balance, anchored on one side by his actions, and on the other, the atrocities committed against an entire race. There is much to be pondered in that space. About humanity and justice. About how to honor a life wrongfully taken. But who writes that story? And whose truth is ultimately put to paper? Join us for a lyrical meditation on the confluence of righteous violence, freedom and belief, shining light on a forgotten figure who was instrumental in the fight to end slavery in America. Helmed by the director who brought you last season's sensation *The Royale*. Featuring: Gavin Lawrence, Jim DeVita.

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, 1,075 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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