



AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE

**FOR RELEASE WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25
12:00 PM CT**

AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2024 Season

Summer Season to Run June 8 – September 29

SPRING GREEN, WIS: American Players Theatre (APT) is thrilled to announce its 2024 lineup, to run June 8 – September 29, with a fall production to be announced at a later date. The Hill Theatre will feature one of Shakespeare's most beloved comedies, ***Much Ado About Nothing***, as well as ***King Lear***, featuring Core Company Actor Brian Mani in the title role. Also playing on the Hill, Christopher Fry's sophisticated comedy, ***Ring Round the Moon***, adapted from the play by Jean Anouilh and last produced at APT in 2001; August Wilson's great American Classic ***Ma Rainey's Black Bottom***, directed by Core Company Member Gavin Lawrence; and a transcendent Irish drama – ***Dancing at Lughnasa*** by Brian Friel, directed by Artistic Director Brenda DeVita.

Next season in the Touchstone Theatre offers four productions never seen before on APT's stages: the world premiere of ***The Virgin Queen Entertains Her Fool*** by Michael Hollinger; ***Wolf at the Door***, a second play in Marisela Treviño Orta's series of Grimm Latinx Fairy Tales, directed by Core Company Member Melisa Pereyra; and the time-traveling love story ***Constellations*** by Nick Payne. A fourth Touchstone production is still to be announced, and will open in late October.

Artistic Director Brenda DeVita said, "Before we launch into 2024, I need to take a minute to express how special the 2023 season was – and continues to be, we still have ***Proof*** opening this weekend – but the actors and artists and artisans, and the audience, and just everyone in the company, really brought their A-game. And it very much made this season a success – a challenge, but not an insurmountable challenge, which can't be said everywhere right now. I am just so in awe of the work everyone put in, and the amazing results of that labor. I'm so grateful."

"And as we look to 2024, we'll be relying on a lot of those same people who made this season so beautiful, and these artists we've been growing our relationship with over many years. Laura Gordon, a brilliant director who has worked with us many times, will be back to direct ***Ring Round the Moon***, this witty, glamorous, smart, period comedy, which will star Nate Burger. And Robert Ramirez, who directed ***The River Bride*** in 2022 will helm ***Much Ado*** on the Hill. Our ***Town*** Director Tim Ocel will be back to direct ***King Lear***, with Brian Mani as Lear, and you know the two of them will be able to find new footholds in this 400-year old play. I am very excited to get to direct on the Hill again next year, and to direct this play, ***Dancing at Lughnasa***. It is a beautiful poetic memory play by Brian Friel and I get to do it with my dear colleagues and friends Tracy Arnold and Colleen Madden. And Gavin Lawrence, a brilliant actor and playwright and director, and of course, a member of APT's Core Company, will be directing on the Hill for the first time. He'll unleash his passion for August Wilson as he directs ***Ma Rainey's Black***

Bottom, with the extraordinary Greta Oglesby coming back to take on the title role. And we're so thankful that Melisa Pereyra will be back from Broadway to direct for the first time at APT, *Wolf at the Door*, this dark and poetic fairy tale by Marisela Treviño Orta that we've been waiting to get on stage since 2022. In the Touchstone next year we'll have an official world-premiere, *The Virgin Queen Entertains her Fool* by Michael Hollinger, which Aaron Posner will be back to direct. And we're doing *Constellations*, which is this time-shifting love story about math and bees and life choices. Directed by the very talented Vanessa Stalling - who's a genius and very busy, so we're thrilled that we finally get to work with her. And it's our 45th anniversary, so it's going to be a celebration of the stories that built this theater, and the stories that will carry APT into our future. We're already working on designs and casting, and can't wait to get to share these stories with our audience next summer."

The 2023 schedule will be available in January, and tickets will go on sale to returning patrons in March. More information at americanplayers.org.

Still to Come in 2023

Proof

By David Auburn

Directed by Brenda DeVita

October 26 – November 19 in the Touchstone Theatre

Tickets are limited – Best availability Tuesday, November 14 at 7:00

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. Featuring Kelsey Brennan, Nate Burger, David Daniel & Laura Rook. *Contains adult themes and language.*

The 2024 Plays

In the Hill Theatre

Ring Round the Moon

By Jean Anouilh

Adapted by Christopher Fry

Directed by Laura Gordon

Join the charming (and clueless) elite for ridiculous night of fun. Twins Hugo and Frederic may look identical, but could not be more different. Frederic, a romantic, spends his nights in the flowers beneath his beloved Diane's window, while Hugo mocks the very idea of love in all its embodiments. Family tensions come to a head during a ball attended by all the very best people. Alongside them, Isabelle, a poor ballerina and her mother smuggled in by Hugo to wreak chaos and mock the wealthy partygoers. Things go hilariously off the rails before the night is through, with all romantic matches thrown to the wind in this lush and witty comedy.

Much Ado About Nothing

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Robert Ramirez

The original will-they-won't-they couple returns to the Hill Stage. Not only are Beatrice and Benedick content with their singleton status, it is their defining feature. Well, that and their piercing wit, which they put on hilarious display whenever they share space. One thing they can agree on is a fine match between their protégés, Hero and Claudio. But the course of true love never did run smooth, and there are storm clouds brewing on the horizon as Don John cooks up

a wicked plan for revenge against his half-brother, Don Pedro. Will all be righted in the end? Find out in one of Shakespeare's most beloved comedies.

August Wilson's

Ma Rainey's Black Bottom

Directed by Gavin Lawrence

August Wilson returns to the Hill for a second play in The American Century Cycle. This time, it's Chicago in the roaring 20s. Trailblazing blues artist Ma Rainey is at the top of her game, and recording a new album. As Ma and her entourage are delayed, her band – brash trumpeter Levee, bassist Slow Drag, pianist Toledo and trombonist Cutler - gets to talking about their pasts and futures, as tempers ebb and wane, and the white record producers make demands of, and promises to, the aspiring musicians.

Dancing at Lughnasa

By Brian Friel

Directed by Brenda DeVita

Dancing at Lughnasa is a captivating exploration of memory and longing. In rural Ireland, the Mundy sisters seek solace in each other, and the radio that keeps them connected to their roots. As they navigate the challenges of family, love and societal change, the women revisit their rituals and memories of happier times. A poignant, poetic memory play that shines a light on the bond between sisters, and the hardships women faced in Ireland in the '30s, written by esteemed Irish playwright Brian Friel (*Molly Sweeney*, produced at APT in 2013).

King Lear

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Tim Ocel

Shakespeare's tragic masterpiece returns, as a King is undone by his own vanity when he asks his daughters to sing his praises, and harshly punishes the only one of them who cares enough about him to tell the truth. Lear's act of selfish folly sets his kingdom on a path toward betrayal, war and unspeakable loss from which few will emerge unscathed. Featuring Brian Mani as Lear.

In the Touchstone Theatre

The World Premiere of

The Virgin Queen Entertains Her Fool

By Michael Hollinger

Directed by Aaron Posner

A revered Queen on her way to quitting this mortal coil ponders who will follow in her footsteps in this world premiere production. Adahlia – a dying queen who has been tasked with spending the whole of her reign unmarried – must choose her successor. But she'd much rather spend her final days being entertained by Ermo, her very funny fool. As those closest to her become more insistent that she makes her choice, long hidden truths begin to emerge from the shadows in this witty, absurdist tragicomedy. *Contains adult themes.*

Wolf at the Door

By Marisela Trenviño Orta

Directed by Melisa Pereyra

Wolf at the Door leans into the darkness that can live inside marriage vows, and the strength, willpower and support needed to break free from it. A mysterious woman arrives at the steps of Isadora and Séptimo's abusive and unhappy home. A pregnant woman, who Séptimo sees as the answer to his quest for an heir – whether she's interested or not. A second play in Orta's ongoing cycle of Latinx fairy tales, along with *The River Bride*, which APT staged in 2022. *Contains adult themes.*

Constellations

By Nick Payne

Directed by Vanessa Stalling

When two people meet for the very first time, the possibilities may just literally be infinite. But what about their choices? Nick Payne's dazzling, mind-bending romance *Constellations* investigates humanity from every different angle through the eyes of Marianne and Roland – a string theorist and a beekeeper, each decision a fork in the road that leads to everywhere. A play about love, physics and how the choices we make echo through time.

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

**For photos or interviews, please contact: Patty Heaston, 608-588-9263,
pheaston@americanplayers.org**

#####