



isn't it wonderful to forgive?



# the aves

by jiehae park    directed by sheila daniels

april 18 - may 3

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# encore

April/May 2026 • Volume 21, No. 5

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Encore Stages is an Encore arts program that features stories about our local arts community alongside information about performances. Encore Stages is a publication of Encore Media Group. We also publish specialty publications, including the SIFF Program, Seattle Pride Magazine, and Seattle Art Dealers' SADA. Learn more at [encoreplus.app](http://encoreplus.app).

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*Bay Area Representative*

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**Encore Media Group**  
1631 15th Ave W, Suite 219  
Seattle, WA 98119-2796  
206.443.0445  
[info@encoremediagroup.com](mailto:info@encoremediagroup.com)  
[encoremediagroup.com](http://encoremediagroup.com)

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**Encore—Connecting Arts, Culture  
and Community.**



*Mary Poppins* at 5th Avenue Theatre.

# A Call for Community from The 5th Avenue Theatre

BY CIARA CAYA

Live theatre gives so much to its patrons. Beyond the entertainment that comes with musicals and plays, we gain the ability to travel through time and space, to new worlds and the lives of strangers. With a ticket we get more than a seat in the theatre, we get access to unbound talent and a shared experience to take home. >>



Above: Amanda Robles and ensemble in the North American tour of *Spamalot*.

Left: 5th Avenue Theatre production of *Bye Bye Birdie*.



It's no secret that since the pandemic arts organizations across the country have been struggling. Many lost a season or two worth of revenue and the climb back to the financial status they had before 2020 has been a slow one. The 5th Avenue Theatre is no exception. A staple of Seattle, The 5th was created, in part, to revitalize downtown 47 years ago—a very similar goal to the one they would have years later when downtown was quiet once more after the pandemic.

Before The 5th, Seattle lacked Broadway shows as touring productions would bypass the Pacific Northwest. But The 5th stepped in to remedy that by creating a space at the historic theatre for shows to land. Beginning in 1989, they invested in becoming one of the nation's

MARK KITAOKA

***“...they can trust in us to support their organization and their artists by showing up.”***

greatest producers of musical theatre. Now not only a stop along the way, The 5th curated and workshoped new musicals, many of which would go on to premiere on Broadway in New York.

The 5th Avenue Theatre has proven time and again that it is a home for artists and patrons. A place we can count on to weather each recession, or even pandemic, that comes its way. The 5th has already made incredible strides to address their financial constraints. In 2023, their leadership enacted the Next 100 Years Campaign which aims to eradicate their deficit, stabilize operations, and create financial safety for the future. This plan is already in action. We've seen it through their alliance with Seattle Theatre Group and their shortening of show runs.

But they can't endure alone. Which is where you, me, and our entire community come in. The 5th has entered a public phase of their campaign, calling on the community they serve to help reach a goal of \$12 million over the next three years. This is a big number, but you can help in small ways. The best way (for yourself and the theatre) is to renew or buy a subscription to their upcoming season. You get an entire year of world-class theatre and they get the steady support they need. You can also make an additional campaign donation to the theatre. Give a little or give a lot, just give.

There are a mutual respect and partnership between ourselves and the arts organizations of our community. We can trust in them to provide a place of welcoming refuge from everyday stresses while inspiring us. And they can trust in us to support their organization and their artists by showing up.

If I haven't convinced you yet, maybe a taste of what you will get from The 5th Avenue Theatre's 2026/27 season (next page) will do the trick.

# It's up to us

**It's our moment.  
Let's show up for each other.**

**#GiveBIG #ItsUpToUs**



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# Coming to

THE 5TH AVENUE THEATRE



## A Chorus Line September 15–27, 2026

A 5, 6, 7, 8... *A Chorus Line* bursts back to The 5th Avenue Theatre's stage in a brand-new production. Packed with iconic songs, electrifying choreography, and moments of raw honesty, *A Chorus Line* celebrates what every Broadway dancer does for love—the sacrifice, courage, passion, and resilience it takes to follow their dreams. This groundbreaking, Pulitzer Prize-winning musical set a new standard for Broadway and remains relevant, poignant, provocative, and explosively entertaining.

## The Wizard of Oz November 27–December 27, 2026

Ruby slippers. Flying monkeys. Emerald City dreams. The 5th Avenue Theatre Company invites you to follow the Yellow Brick Road back to *The Wizard of Oz*, the original story that has filled generations with wonder and imagination. You'll be awed at every twist and turn of Dorothy's journey with unforgettable music, and jaw-dropping theatrical magic, as we take you over the rainbow to the Merry Old Land of Oz!

Operation Mincemeat:  
A New Musical  
February 10–21, 2027

How did a dead body, a fake love letter, and—of all people—Ian Fleming turn the tide of World War II? Olivier Award winner for Best New Musical and a 2025 Tony® winner, *Operation Mincemeat: A New Musical* is the best-reviewed show in West End history. It's 1943 and the Allies are on the ropes. Luckily, they're about to gamble our futures on a stolen corpse. *Singin' in the Rain* meets *Strangers on a Train*, it's the fast-paced, hilarious true story of the secret mission that won WWII.

A Surprise Musical  
Early Summer 2027

The 5th is pursuing a thrilling new opportunity currently taking shape behind the curtain that isn't ready to be revealed just yet. Sometimes show rights and confirmations take longer than anticipated and this one was worth waiting for! All we can say for now is that a can't-miss musical awaits you.

Maybe Happy Ending  
July 21–August 1, 2027

Winner of six Tony Awards®, including Best Musical, *Maybe Happy Ending* tells the deeply human story of a chance encounter that sparks connection, adventure, and maybe even love. Helmed by Tony Award®-winning director Michael Arden (*Parade*), *Maybe Happy Ending* has been called “one of the best musicals in years” (*USA Today*) and even “The best musical in eons!” (*Observer*). Don't miss the totally original new musical adventure that explores what it means to be human. Even if they're not.

Ciara Caya writes the weekly Beyond the Stage newsletter for Encore+.




photo of Lisa Fischer by Parker Blohm for KNKX

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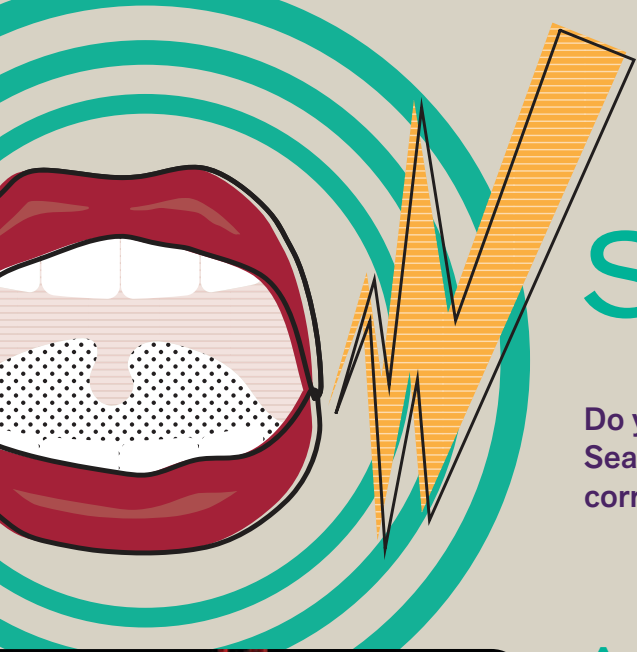
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# Say What?

Do you keep up to date on all the news and reviews for Seattle performances? Match the quote from a review to the correct title or artist of an upcoming show.



MOMIX

**A**  
Daniil Trifonov

**B**  
MOMIX

**C**  
*Les Misérables*

**D**  
East Coast  
Chamber  
Orchestra

**E**  
*Carmen*

**F**  
*Mary Jane*

1

“Three acts of exquisite earworms and engaging action.”

– *The Seattle Times*

2

“A reborn dream of a production.”

– *Daily Telegraph (UK)*

3

“A marvelously dizzying flow of physical activities and illusions amid expansive, artful projections.”

– *The Wall Street Journal*

4

“[A] strangely irresistible combination of volcanic energy and intimate expression...”

– *New York Classical Review*

5

“There’s nothing small about this carefully constructed and deeply affecting drama...”

– *New York Theatre Guide*

6

“These youthful players are helping form classical music’s future.”

– *The Washington Post*

1. E—*Carmen*  
2. C—*Les Misérables*  
3. B—MOMIX  
4. A—Daniil Trifonov  
5. F—*Mary Jane*  
6. D—East Coast Chamber Orchestra



# the aves

by Jiehae Park  
directed by Sheila Daniels

April 18 - May 3, 2026

## CAST

**ZÉ ZÉ CRAMER**  
A GIRL

**VARINIQUE "V" DAVIS**  
YOUNG WOMAN

**JERIK FERNANDEZ**  
YOUNG MAN

**KATHY HSIEH**  
OLD WOMAN

**R. HAMILTON WRIGHT\*†**  
OLD MAN

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FIGHT DIRECTOR

**SARAH HARLETT**  
INTIMACY DIRECTOR

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**MADELYN SALVUCCI**  
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THE AVES received a reading at the Alley Theatre  
Rob Melrose, Artistic Director and Dean R. Gladden, Managing Director

World Premiere produced May 2025 by Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Berkeley, CA  
Johanna Pfaelzer, Artistic Director / Tom Parrish, Managing Director

\*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States  
^Member of the Society of Directors and Choreographers (SDC) † Core Company member

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## Patron Information

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The videotaping or making of electronic or other audio and/or visual recordings or streams in any medium, including the internet, is strictly prohibited, a violation of the author(s)'s rights and actionable under United States copyright law.

Audience members are cordially reminded to silence all electronic devices. Please do not walk on the stage before, during, or after the show.

### FOOD AND DRINK

Bar service and concessions are available in the lobby. Pre-ordering for intermission is available for most shows. No outside food or drink is allowed.

### SMOKING POLICY

Smoking is not allowed in any part of the building or within 25 feet of the entrance.

### FIREARMS POLICY

No firearms of any kind are allowed in any part of the building.

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Please contact the Box Office at [boxoffice@unionartscenter.org](mailto:boxoffice@unionartscenter.org) or call 206.292.7676.

For Box Office hours, visit [unionartscenter.org/visit/box-office](http://unionartscenter.org/visit/box-office).

### ACCESSIBILITY

Union Arts Center offers the **Figaro MobiTxt® Closed Captioning System for audience members who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**. This system is offered at all performances in most of our theatres. Union Arts Center is also equipped with the **Williams Sound® Audio Equipment, which amplifies stage sounds with the aid of headsets and also provides sound for our Audio Description performances**. Both devices can be reserved at the time of ticket purchase and/or requested upon arrival to the theatre at the Accessibility table (please ask staff for assistance).

**Sensory Kits and Sensory Wobble Cushions for adults and children** are available and can be picked up at our Accessibility table. The kits contain noise-cancelling headphones, earplugs, sunglasses, sensory tubes, and fidget items.

**Large Print Programs and Large Print Scripts** are available and can be picked up at our Accessibility table.

**Audio Description and American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation** is offered at the following performance of *the aves*: Saturday, May 2 at 2pm.

ASL Interpreters: Courtney Coddington and Ginevra Deianni  
Audio Describer: Lynne Compton

### UNION ARTS CENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

700 Union Street, Seattle, WA 98101

Phone: 206.292.7676 | [unionartscenter.org](http://unionartscenter.org)



## A Letter from Managing Director John Bradshaw

One of the things that has made our region so remarkable is both the amount and the quality of arts and cultural experiences: theatre, music, dance, museums. Local artists, local artisans, local cultural workers, creating experiences rooted in our region. Making us rich where it counts most, in our quality of life. A unique community considering the size of our metropolitan population and yet the large number of arts and cultural organizations to be found here.

But this community is at risk. It's been well documented. Attendance has been exceptionally slow to recover from COVID-19. Along with fewer people attending, fewer people are giving their support. Expenses have risen dramatically. This is our story at Union Arts Center and the story of cultural organization after organization here and across the country. The result is deep budgetary cuts and calls for urgent and emergency support, often creating a downward spiral – less revenues, less programming, more cuts.

In addition, a generation of civic leaders in our region have been passing away. Leaders whose vision built modern Seattle. Leaders who equated a healthy community with one steeped in arts and culture.

So, as with many of our colleagues, we sit on the brink. To address this, Union Arts Center has launched a "sustainability" campaign to take us through the next few years and enable us to transform how we operate. We know many of our former audiences won't return, so we need to attract new ones. We need to form partnerships to better utilize this wonderful, wacky, beautiful 100-year-old building. We need a new generation of donors and civic leaders to step up.

The City of Seattle has generously invested in our transformation by including Union Arts Center in the new PIVOT program. This creates a cohort of cultural organizations to develop transformational change. We are thrilled to be a part of this program.

Excitingly, we have a new Artistic Director to lead us forward and welcome her to Union Arts Center! Yuvika Tolani joins us on Monday, May 4. She brings seven years of producing leadership at The Public Theatre in New York City, where she oversaw a team delivering more than 20 productions annually, from Shakespeare in the Park to Off-Broadway premieres and community pageants. As Director of Producing, she partnered with executive leadership on season planning, institutional strategy, and artist development. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from Yale University and a Master in City Planning from MIT. This remarkable mix of theatre producing and civic expertise creates a dynamic background as we transform this theatre and create a model for other theatres.

After much work, we have assembled a powerful, thrilling season beginning in the fall. A mix of Shakespeare and contemporary reflecting our merged vision, leading off with one of the most recognizable of Shakespeare plays, *Hamlet*. I hope you share my enthusiasm for this upcoming season!

What can you do? Attend. Become a subscriber or a member. Donate. Join us. At Union Arts Center but also at any of the many arts and cultural organizations to be found in our region. Most of all, spread the word. If you value these experiences, tell people. Share your joy, your wonder, your passion.

Thank you and see you at the theatre!

- John Bradshaw

# A Letter from Director Sheila Daniels

Last Summer while first reading *the aves*, I was also reading Robert Macfarlane's *Is a River Alive?* and learning about the process of "daylighting" - the unearthing of streams and other bodies of water from man-made constructs - roads and buildings for example - to expose them to light and air. It seemed then - and seems now - a resonant metaphor for the journey taken by the characters in Jihae Park's beautiful play, that of unearthing their own exterior layers to reveal their interiors.

Two mysteries exist at the heart of *the aves* - the mystery of physical actions taken by the characters, and the mystery of the intricacies of the human heart. How do we navigate our personal desires to find our ideal life? What are we willing to sacrifice for those we love? How do we grapple with the harm we cause those we love and find it in ourselves to forgive and to be forgiven?

"A small 'self' suffers and causes suffering, [while] a love of the living world lets single identities and selfhoods expand and encompass other beings, entities and whole landscapes, such that the self becomes a spacious thing." - Robert Macfarlane, *Is a River Alive?*

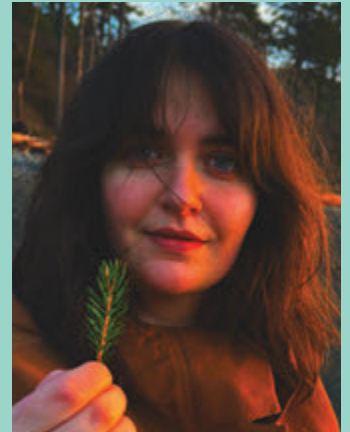
- Sheila Daniels



# Why the aves?

from Tess Berger, Associate Creative Director & Curation Committee Member

It's rare to find a play that stops you in your tracks. And often, the plays that do are huge feats of spectacle, epic language, intense relationship dynamics, driving plots. Scripts like that certainly have their place, and ricochet nicely with the sheer overstimulation we experience every day outside the theatre. Blue light, traffic, breaking news emails, swiping from the most disturbingly violent video you've ever seen to "what if Traitors contestants were AI kittens" – we are POUNDED by sensory overload every single day.



*the aves* stopped me in my tracks in the exact opposite way. Picking it up and seeing the sparseness of the words on the page felt like an exhale. To see/read/experience this play is to exist, for a time, outside of the pounding. And yet it's not escapist; rather, the setting allows the characters space to process questions that the loudness of the world often distracts us from. Similar to what Director Sheila Daniels writes, I feel the show asking questions like: what do we owe the ones we love? Are we our bodies or are we our souls? Is love within us or is it all around?

When we curate a season, of course we think about how all the shows fit together and the throughlines we can find between them, particularly when one show follows another. Union Arts Center's previous show, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, planted us firmly in the natural world in a vastly different (but also... kind of similar?) way to *the aves*. While the forest in *Midsummer* gives permission for chaos, lack of thought, lack of stillness, the park in *the aves* does the opposite –



almost. The overlap lies in the rawness. Nature causes us all to return to something more primal and internal. And while *the aves* is certainly a thinking play, I don't feel its impact in my brain like I do with other "make you think" media. It is a gut punch. It hits where *Midsummer* does – not in the same way but definitely in the same place. It also hits in the same place that I feel something when I see the approaching Olympics from the ferry, or when I dip my fingers into a pale turquoise alpine lake, brightened by glacial flour. Or when I sit quietly on a bench in the park watching the birds.

This play means a lot to me. I hope it colors the world a little differently for you as well.

# A Certain Kind of Attention: An Interview with Jiehae Park

by David Medizábal, Associate Artistic Director/Director of In Dialogue, Berkeley Repertory Theatre

**David Mendizábal:** What made you want to be a theatre artist?

**Jiehae Park:** I didn't speak English when I came to America. Like a lot of immigrant kids, I spent time just trying to figure out what this place is. Who am I? Where do I fit? Being an immigrant kid has an extra layer of adjusting to the language and to the culture. Theatre was always an escape for me. When I was a little kid, I'd go to our basement and put on a Disney soundtrack and dance by myself for hours, and it felt so joyful and safe. So, theatre was a place to feel imaginative, safe and playful for me.

**DM:** Professionally, you started off performing and transitioned into writing. What motivated the choice and how does your experience as an actor inform your writing?

**JP:** I think a lot of writers start off as actors because acting feels the most accessible when we are younger. I went to grad school for acting and I was always the least actor-y actor. It became clear to me pretty quickly after graduating that the lifestyle of an actor was not something that felt stable enough or appealing as a long-term life goal, although I did love performing. But mostly what I loved was just being a part of the process. I loved being in rehearsal and figuring things out. And that feels related to writing. For me, trying to figure out big questions is the best part of writing. Because I was an actor for a long time, I have a deep desire to have honest, alive-feeling characters.

**DM:** What were some of your earliest artistic inspirations — either artists or works that have had an imprint on you and your aesthetic?

**JP:** When I was growing up, I did what a lot of kids in the suburbs do, which was to get my hands on whatever I could that was available at the public library. I remember getting a book of off-Broadway plays and Christopher Durang's *The Marriage of Bette and Boo* was in it, and I was like, "what is this?!" There were plenty of other plays that I read that didn't register. But once in a while, you come across something that feels like, "oh my gosh, this is for me."

That play was *The Danube* by María Irene Fornés. I didn't know what it was, but it was amazing! That feeling of awe and excitement is what I still respond to as a theatregoer. And that spark of life is certainly something I hope to aspire to in the best moments of my plays. And then, on the other hand, I loved Broadway musicals. I had a double CD of *The Phantom of the Opera* that I played on a loop and sang along with every part. There was something about the openness and vulnerability of a musical that felt very different from the rest of my life. So, I feel like that downtown art aesthetic and big hearted emotional musical theatre are a big part of what I respond to.

**DM:** What was the genesis of the *aves*? How has it evolved through its development process?

**JP:** To explain the genesis, there's the practical container story, and a subconscious story. The practical container story is that I went on a silent writing retreat facilitated by playwright Erik Ehn, and I spent the entire time writing a really bad play which was about an old couple in a postapocalyptic world covered in snow. I realized before I left that it was a really bad play, but it was necessary for me to write it. It felt like a mental detox. I think the subconscious questions underneath the play were about aging and relationships over a long period of time, and memory. Being an immigrant is such a big part of my identity. My memory of places and the peculiar distance of them is something that always swirls around in my consciousness.

I'd been reading all these books about the philosophy and science of time for a different project. Around the time I started writing the *aves*, I lived in Harlem just north of Central Park. I had this tiny little window that looked out onto the north side of Central Park, and I found that there was this guy who was always there every morning. I opened my computer to write, and I just noticed that the same guy was there every day. I watched the seasons change from that little window because he was there. The leaves were green, but then the leaves were falling, and then it was snowy. I think these human questions began to bubble up in my subconscious to make this play.

# A Certain Kind of Attention: An Interview with Jiehae Park

by David Medizábal, Associate Artistic Director/Director of In Dialogue, Berkeley Repertory Theatre

**DM:** I heard that this play was also about your family, and that you became a mom during its development. Can you share with us how being a child of immigrants and now being a mother has informed the play?

**JP:** I didn't realize that I was pulling threads from my family until I had written it. There are a lot of relationship dynamics in the play that reflect the generation before me. I feel this question in my life, which I think everybody does: if this is a dynamic that I learned, is it something that can be unlearned? To what extent is it beautiful and to what extent is it harmful? What is the potential for change within a relationship and within yourself, regardless of age? I think those two things go hand in hand. You can't have change in a relationship without change in yourself. So that thread has become clearer to me as I work on it.

I have become a parent, and that changes my relationships, too. In most of my plays, characters don't talk about parents. In those worlds, characters don't seem like they have parents or children. I think this is a feeling that is relatable in the world that we live in today. We ask where the adults are, and realize the adults are us. But — oh no! — we're also children. That's a quality of, not childishness, but maybe childlikeness in all of the characters in the play. It's a beautiful thing that they're searching for themselves.

**DM:** Design and aesthetics are really important to you as a writer — in fact, a lot is written into the text about how the world should feel. How is your process as a writer shaped by the design process and what is that collaboration like for you and your director?

**JP:** I knew that the visual and sonic elements of the piece would be so important to the very specific, still, delicate feeling in which I wanted to hold the audience. I really want the audience to feel held by this play. So I tried to have designers be present from the earliest readings. In multiple workshops, we thought through the practicalities of the play and what possibilities there were for it to look and sound very abstract. Not designing for a specific space was very helpful in the play development and for future conversations. For this production, [director] Knud Adams and [scenic designer] Marsha Ginsberg have come up with a beautiful set that looks nothing like the previous iterations, but there is a soulful undercurrent at its core that is tied to an ongoing conversation that Knud and I have been having. Knud's design eye is so impeccable, so elegant and spare. The thing that lives and breathes for the ephemeral moments in time wouldn't have been possible without the specific people involved in this design team.

**DM:** You and Knud have talked a lot about the stillness and the meditative space that you want to hold for the audience. How do you hope an audience will enter the theatre and what advice would you give an audience member who's about to watch the play?

**JP:** I have noticed in myself recently a tendency to see a play like I'm consuming a product rather than joining an ancient, ritualistic human experience. But my love of theatre came from a place that is the opposite of that, which is a memory of being a child and going to see something and being like, wow. I cherish the feeling of awe so much when I'm an audience member. So, the hope for the audience experience is to spark a bit of that. How can we create a space where we allow audiences to feel like they can lean in, and be with their own bodies and pay attention in a way that is not asked of them or given to them in everyday life? I certainly don't feel that gift in everyday life for myself. So, what does it mean to enter a different kind of space and to be in that space for a period of time with another group of people? I believe we've all had this feeling in a show where time stopped and we were all breathing together and feeling the same thing. I'm curious about that experience in the container of relative quietness. The play is not complete without the audience, and it asks of them a certain kind of attention that I think is very exciting.

*Interview originally appeared in the Berkeley Repertory Theatre Magazine, 2024/25 issue 7.*

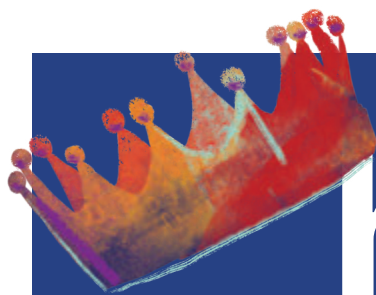


union arts center

2026/27 season

This season at Union Arts Center, five productions dare you to look beneath the surface, where the truth is messier, funnier, stranger, and more human than we ever expect. Join us for a season that won't let you look away.

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# hamlet

by William Shakespeare



september 19 –  
october 11, 2026

A father is dead. A mother has moved on. And a son can feel the lies closing in around him. The court celebrates, the kingdom carries on, but Hamlet is the only one willing to look beneath the surface. The deeper he digs, the more dangerous the truth becomes, and the harder it gets to tell friend from enemy, sanity from madness, justice from revenge. In Shakespeare's most legendary tragedy, the truth will come out. The question is who will survive it.



# table17

by Douglas Lyons

october 24 –  
november 15,  
2026

If your ex called, would you answer? Jada and Dallas were once engaged. Now, two years after their breakup, they're sitting across from each other at their favorite restaurant, trying to keep it casual. Good luck with that. Between a waiter with no boundaries, wounds that never quite healed, and a spark that neither one of them can ignore, this "simple dinner" is about to go off script. From two-time Emmy nominee and playwright Douglas Lyons, *Table 17* is the best date night you'll have all season. Grab your person and make a reservation.





# meteor shower

by steve martin



february 6 –  
february 28,  
2027

Leave it to Steve Martin to turn a quiet evening under the stars into total, glorious chaos. Corky and Norm have invited another couple over to watch a once-in-a-lifetime meteor shower. Simple enough. But something about the guests is... off, the conversation keeps taking sharp turns, and somewhere between the wine and the sky falling, the line between what's real and what's not dissolves completely. This is Steve Martin at his most inventive: a comedy that goes exactly where you don't expect and never once looks back.



# much ado about nothing

by William  
shakespeare

Beatrice and Benedick are not in love. Ask them, they'll tell you. Loudly. Repeatedly. With increasingly elaborate insults. The only people who aren't buying it? Everyone else. Shakespeare's wittiest comedy throws two of the sharpest tongues in theater onto a collision course while their friends scheme and meddle to force what everyone already knows. But the insults are getting softer. The glances are lasting longer. And pride is the only thing still standing in the way.

march 20 – april 11, 2027

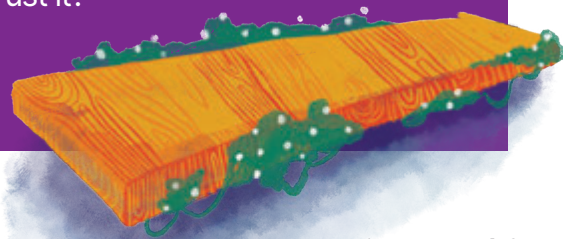


# the river bride

by marisela  
treviño orta

Three days before her sister's wedding, a stranger is pulled from the Amazon River. No name. No memory. No explanation. Just a magnetism that neither sister can resist. In a small Brazilian fishing village where old stories still hold power, Marisela Treviño Orta weaves a modern fable of desire, jealousy, and the ties that bind us to the people we love and the ones we should have chosen. Part folklore, part love story, part fairy tale with teeth, *The River Bride* asks: when fate pulls something extraordinary out of the water, do you trust it?

may 1 – 30, 2027



# looking for space?

**Union Arts Center has many  
unique and beautiful spaces  
to offer for your next event,  
meeting or production!**

**Send an inquiry to  
[rentals@unionartscenter.org](mailto:rentals@unionartscenter.org)  
or get more information:**



## Who's Who in the *aves*



### ZÉ ZÉ CRAMER

A GIRL

Zé Zé is over the moon to be part of *the aves*! She recently appeared in Union Arts Center's *A Christmas Carol* and joined Seattle Rep's Public Works production of *The Tempest*. When she's not treading the boards and conjuring theatrical magic, she can be found soaring through round-off back handsprings in gymnastics or ruling her kingdom alongside her tiny (but unquestionably regal) dog, Zara.



### VARINIQUE "V" DAVIS

(she/her)

YOUNG  
WOMAN

V is an artist born and raised in Seattle. She's thrilled to be a part of this production to help tell this story. She wants to thank the people she loves the most: her family, Tiffany, Talon, Toni, the Dollies, and her friends. Enjoy the show.



### JERIK FERNANDEZ

(he/him)

YOUNG MAN

Jerik is a Seattle based multi-hyphenate artist from the Bay Area. He is a graduate of the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts and Cornish College of the Arts. He recently graduated with an MFA in Acting from the University of Washington. Notable credits include Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, Polonius in *Hamlet*, Feste in *Twelfth Night* (Seattle Shakespeare); Marek in *My Antonia* (Book-It); Rapp in *Yaga* (Dacha); Ensemble in *Q Brother's Christmas Carol* (ArtsWest). He is a co-founder of the Young Hot Thespian (YHT) theatre collective. He would like to thank his fiancée, Erin, for all the love she gives.



### KATHY HSIEH

(she/her)

OLD WOMAN

Kathy Hsieh is an award-winning actor, writer, director, and producer. Recent acting credits include SIS Productions/Seattle Public Theater/Yun Theatre's *Li*, SIS & Pork Filled Productions' *Exotic Deadly: Or the MSG Play*, Third Rail Rep's *Infinite Life*, and PassinArt/Portland Playhouse's *Yohen*. Over the years she has performed with many theatres in Seattle including The 14/48 Projects, ACT, Annex Theatre, ArtsWest, Book-It, Copious Love, Freehold Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Living Voices, Pony World, ReACT, Seattle Rep, Seattle Shakespeare, Sound Theatre, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, The Shattered Glass Project, Taproot Theatre, and more. Her performance honors include a Sacramento Elly Award nomination for Best Actress in *Chinglish* in Nevada City, Footlight and Gypsy Awards for acting in *Chinglish* at ArtsWest, a 2019 Gypsy Award for acting in *Washer/Dryer*, and a 2017 Gregory Award for Sustained Achievement in Theatre.



### R. HAMILTON WRIGHT

(he/him)

OLD MAN

R. Hamilton Wright has been a working actor for fifty years and in that time has appeared in over 150 professional productions. A few of his favorites: *A Midsummer's Night Dream* by William Shakespeare at Union Arts Center, *Scapin* by Moliere, adapted by Bill Irwin and Mark O'Donnel at Seattle Rep, *A Chorus of Disapproval* by Alan Ayckbourn at ACT Theatre, and *The Government Inspector* by Nikolai Gogol, adapted by Jeffery Hatcher at Seattle Shakespeare Company.



### SHEILA DANIELS

DIRECTOR

Sheila Daniels is a multi-disciplinary theatre-maker based in Seattle. Her directing work was last seen at ACT with Sarah DeLappe's *The Wolves*. Other directing credits include: Seattle Rep (*Indecent*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*), Intiman Theatre (*The Niceties*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Crime & Punishment*, *Lysistrata*), Strawberry Theatre Workshop (*Breaking the Code*, *Lydia*, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*), Seattle Shakespeare Company (*A Winter's Tale*, *Pericles*, *Electra*, *Macbeth*), Seattle Children's Theatre (*Jackie & Me*) and many other wonderful companies. Nationally, she has worked in New Mexico, Ohio, and NYC. Sheila served as Associate Director at Intiman under Bart Sher from 2007-2009. She is an Associate Professor at Cornish College of the Arts at Seattle U, teaching Directing, Acting, and Devising. Sheila is in the multi-year process of making the documentary "Hidden Bodies: stereotyping and shaming of the femme body in American theater." This one is for Mama and Dada.

### JIEHAE PARK PLAYWRIGHT

Jiehae Park's plays *peerless* and *Hannah & the Dread Gazebo* have been produced at Yale Rep, Primary Stages, Marin Theatre, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival, among others. Awards: Steinberg, Blackburn Finalist, Princess Grace, Weissberger, Leah Ryan, Edgerton. Current commissions: Playwrights Horizons, Yale Rep, Geffen. Residencies: MacDowell, Yaddo, Hedgebrook, McCarter/Sallie B. Goodman. TV: *Hello Tomorrow!*, *The Morning Show* (S4), *Marvel's Runaways*, *Command Z* (dir. Steven Soderbergh, WGA nom). As a performer: *Command Z*, *Celine Song's Endlings* (NYTW, ART), and *Ripe Time*/Naomi Izuka's adaptation of Haruki Murakami's *Sleep* (BAM Next Wave, Yale Rep). She has been a Tow and

## Who's Who in the *aves*

Hodder Fellow, Lincoln Center Theater writer in residence, and is currently a NYTW Usual Suspect and New Dramatist (class of 2026).

### L.B. MORSE

(he/him)

#### SCENIC DESIGNER

L.B. Morse is a lighting, scenic, and multimedia designer for the performing and cultural arts. Previous designs with Union Arts Center include *Shrew* (lighting). Previous designs at ACT include *Sweat* (scenic/lighting); *Oslo* (scenic/projections); *The Wolves* (scenic); *Rapture, Blister, Burn* (lighting); *Pilgrims Musa and Sheri in the New World* (lighting); *Fathers and Sons* (lighting); and *Mitzi's Abortion* (projections). Locally, he has also designed for Seattle Rep, The 5th Avenue Theatre, Village Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, Woodland Park Zoo, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, and On the Boards, among others. Nationally, he has designed for Pittsburgh Public Theater, Indiana Repertory Theatre, UCSB Launch Pad, Tantrum Theater, and Children's Theatre Company. L.B. holds a BA in Theatre Arts and a Graduate Certificate in Scenic Design from University of California, Santa Cruz, and is a proud member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829.

### MELANIE BURGESS

#### COSTUME DESIGNER

Melanie Taylor Burgess has designed costumes for over 200 productions for: Seattle Opera, Seattle Rep, The 5th Avenue Theatre, ACT, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Intiman Theatre, Village Theatre, Seattle Children's Theatre, and many others. Regionally for: The Guthrie, Pittsburgh Playhouse, Cincinnati Playhouse, Denver Center, Arizona Theatre Company, Minneapolis Children's Theatre, Playmaker Repertory Co., Idaho Theatre for Youth, Honolulu Theatre for Youth, and Hawaii Opera. Melanie is the recipient of the 1st Gregory Award for Outstanding Costume Design 2010 and again in 2019 and several other regional Awards. She is a professor of Costume Design

at Cornish College of the Arts.

### ROBBIE MATOS

(he/him)

#### LIGHTING DESIGNER

Robbie Matos is a Seattle-based lighting designer and programmer working across theatre, cabaret, corporate, and live events nationwide. A two-time recipient of the BroadwayWorld Seattle Award for Best Lighting Design of a Musical, he currently serves as Lighting and Technical Director for Can Can Cabaret in Pike Place Market. Robbie is grateful to collaborate with this talented team and is thrilled to make his Union Arts Center debut, helping immerse audiences in the world of *the aves*. He also thanks his parents for never questioning why eight-year-old Robbie insisted on extension cords and DJ lights for his birthday.

### MATT STARRITT

(he/him)

#### SOUND DESIGNER

Matt is a Seattle-based freelance sound designer. In Seattle, he has designed for ACT, Seattle Rep, Intiman Theatre, Seattle Shakespeare, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, Book-It, ArtsWest, Cherdonna, Kitten and Lou, New Century Theatre Company, The Williams Project, BenDeLaCreme, Waxie Moon, zoe | juniper, and Washington Ensemble Theatre. Nationally, he has designed for Alley Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Cornerstone Theater Company, The Old Globe, South Coast Repertory, and the Under the Radar Festival at the Public Theatre. He is the sound supervisor at Meany Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Washington and was a founding member of Washington Ensemble Theatre.

### ANNETT MATEO

#### PUPPET DESIGNER & COACH

Annett Mateo believes anything can be a puppet! She has made all kinds of puppets out of all kinds of materials for people, projects and theatres

both nationally and internationally. In her career as a professional puppet designer and builder she has built marionettes, Muppet type puppets, rod puppets, large body/costume style, modified Banraku, shadow and pretty much every other kind of puppet. She has attended the O'Neill Theatre conference for Puppetry for a number of years and is now on staff there. She has been a member of a puppet improv group, done theatre performances for adults and is a regular participant of regional puppet slams. You can view her puppets on puppetlandia.com.

### RAYA TUFFAHA

#### FIGHT DIRECTOR

Raya Tuffaha is a Palestinian fight director, actor, and writer from Seattle. Fight Director credits include Union Arts Center's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Renton Civic Theatre, Latitude Theatre, Ballyhoo Theatre, Rainy Day Artistic Collective, and Theatre33. Local acting credits include Strawberry Theatre Workshop (*Circle Mirror Transformation*) and Artemis Theatre Project (*Chick Fight!*). Arab America's 30 Under 30. SAFD AAC. www.rayatuffaha.com "Let it be a tale."

### SARAH HARLETT

#### INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Recent intimacy direction credits: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Union Arts Center); *The Bed Trick*, *Macbeth* Education Tour (Seattle Shakespeare Company); *Sanctuary City* (Seattle Rep); *Hello Dolly* and *Mamma Mia* (Village Theatre); *As You Like It*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Cymbeline* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Wooden O). At Cornish College of the Arts: *Gypsy*, *Mother Courage and her Children*, *Everybody*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Amelie*, *Chess*, *Head Over Heels*, *Pericles*, *Cabaret*, *Our Town*, *Corner's Grove*, *Chicago*, *Orlando*, and *Once*. Elsewhere, *Refugees in the Garden City* (ReAct/Pratidhwani); *Monsters of the American Cinema* (ArtsWest); *Eurydice* (Seattle University); *Measure for Measure* (Engaged Theater); and the film, *In The Water*. Sarah is also an actor and teaching artist.

## MACKENZIE BREDA

(she/her)

### STAGE MANAGER

Mackenzie Breda is a freelance Seattle stage manager and theatre technician. She is so excited to be working at Union Arts Center for the first time! Recent credits include: *9 to 5: The Musical* and *The Color Purple* at Village Theatre. Other companies she has worked with include Taproot Theatre, Acrobatic Conundrum, Woodland Park Players, UW Department of Drama, Seattle Public Theater, Vashon Repertory Theatre, Seattle Historical Theatre Project, and The Feast. She also frequently does live event work around Seattle. Much love to her family and friends! [mackenziebreda.com](http://mackenziebreda.com).

## MADelyn SALVUCCI

(she/they)

### PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

Madelyn Salvucci is excited to be working on her first show at Union Arts Center! Her deepest passion is building spaces where people can believe in magic again (even if just for a short while). Assistant Stage Management: *The Pigeon Gets a Big Time Holiday Extravaganza* (Seattle Children's Theatre), *As You Like It* (Wooden O), *Macbeth* (Seattle Shakespeare), *Black Nativity - 2023* (Intiman). Stage Management Apprentice: *Skin of Our Teeth*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Mother Russia* (Seattle Rep). Stage Management: *Chicago*, *Into the Woods*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *The 39 Steps* (Youth Theatre Northwest), *The Lion Tells His Tale* (Intiman), *The Tempest*, *Cymbeline* (Wooden O). She is ever grateful for her partner and dog, and their love and support.

## MARIANA AMORINE

(she/her)

### YOUTH SUPERVISOR

Born and raised in Mexico City, Mariana Amorine is a fashion designer and costume professional with a passion for storytelling through clothing. She earned her Costume Design and Wardrobe Technician certificate from

the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT), expanding her technical and creative expertise. Before moving to the United States four years ago, she worked extensively in Mexico's fashion and theater industries, contributing to major productions such as *Mentiras: El Musical* and participating in Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week Mexico. Since relocating to Seattle, she has been actively involved in the local theater community, volunteering with various companies and refining her craft behind the scenes. She also has professional experience in childcare and lives in West Seattle with her husband and dog, Henry. She is excited to be part of this production and grateful for the opportunity to contribute her creativity and passion to Seattle's vibrant and growing arts community.

Union Arts Center operates under agreements with the following:



Scenery, Stage, Costume, and Youth Supervisor work is performed by employees represented by I.A.T.S.E. Locals Number 15, 488, and 887.

This theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres; Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States; Stage Directors and Choreographers Society; and United Scenic Artists.



# Donors have more fun!

<b>2026/27 SEASON BENEFITS</b>	<b>Supporting Players \$100</b>	<b>Ensemble Players \$250</b>	<b>Principal Players \$500</b>	<b>Activists \$1,000</b>	<b>Impactors \$2,500</b>	<b>Benefactors \$5,000</b>	<b>Creative Producers \$10,000</b>
* Invitation for 2 to our historic theatre tour							
Subscription to Spotlight, our donor newsletter							
Invitation for 2 to a Tech Talk							
Commemorative pin							
VIP ticketing service							
* Biannual book club							
Behind-the-scenes tour							
Advanced notice of our upcoming season							
* Access to one pop-up donor lounge during the season							
Invitation for 2 to a Tech Talk and Rehearsal							
<b>Complimentary parking passes at Union Square Garage</b>							
Invitation for 2 to one Executive Drinks							
Invitation for 2 to all Executive Drinks							
* Local donor field trips							
* Access to pop-up donor lounges all year long (5 per season)							
Invitation for 2 to a Meet-the-Maker event							
* Future travel opportunities							
Four complimentary drink vouchers							

\* NEW THIS SEASON

## New benefits added in the 2026/27 Season

**Book Club: \$500+**

**Historic Building Tour: \$100+**

**Lounge Pop-Up: \$1,000+**

Visit [give.unionartscenter.org/encore26](https://give.unionartscenter.org/encore26)  
or scan the QR code  
to securely make your donation!



# Thank you!

We are deeply grateful for the leadership and support of the community members we lost this year. Our hearts are with their families, friends, and all who were touched by their lives.

**Becky Benaroya**

**Philip Brazil**

**John and Ellen Hill**

**Anthony A. Martello**

**Nancy Skinner Nordhoff**

**Charles M. Pigott**

**Douglas Pogoloff**

**Douglas Raff**

**Ann P. Wyckoff**

## Thank you to our *Midsummer* audiences!

**You raised \$27,000 in support of live, local theatre!**

**Your gifts ensure performances sparks conversation,  
storytelling invites civic engagement, and shared experience  
strengthens the fabric of our community.**

View a complete list of  
donors and learn more:



View a complete list of corporate,  
foundation, and government  
partners and learn more:



View a complete list of  
volunteers and learn how to get  
involved:



# SUSTAIN OUR STAGES

**URGENT:** We must secure \$2 million in new and increased giving commitments by June 30 to stabilize revenue and provide critical operational support.

**Total Goal:** \$5 Million by June 2028 to ensure we have the resources to not only maintain, but to thrive.

Union Arts Center unites the artistic missions of ACT and Seattle Shakespeare, creating an unprecedented opportunity: five performance spaces in the heart of downtown, steps from public transit and accessible parking, with an exciting new artistic leader, Yuvika Tolani.

With the right financial foundation, we can bring this building to life with performances, education for students of all ages, and expanded community programming.

**The opportunity is immense. The barrier is financial.**

**Crucial, catalytic funding today determines whether we stabilize, grow, and thrive—or whether Seattle loses a vital civic asset.**



## OUR VISION

### **A Vibrant, Fully Activated Campus**

Two theatres operating simultaneously:

- Cabaret, black box theatre and studio spaces alive with classes, workshops, rehearsals, and community gatherings
- Programming that brings contemporary and classical work into dynamic conversation

### **Expanded Seasons & Audience Growth**

Beginning in 2026/27, longer production runs allow stories to reach more people and maximize earned revenue. Extended runs also expand student matinees, one of the most meaningful access points for young people discovering live theatre.

### **More Programs & Partnerships**

Your support helps us open more learning opportunities for all ages, provide additional scholarships, and create hands-on experiences that nurture empathy, confidence, and imagination.

### **Building Improvements**

We hear you.

There are a number of upgrades to infrastructure that would make your experience as audience members more enjoyable. Leadership funding allows us to shift from reactive emergency repairs to proactive stewardship of our beloved Eagles building.

## YOUR LEADERSHIP SUPPORT will:

- Open artistic possibilities
- Stabilize operations and protect jobs
- Reduce risk in a fragile facility
- Unlock capacity across multiple venues

With your financial investment, Union Arts Center will not only survive this moment—it will define what comes next for Seattle.

**Transformational Gifts of all sizes are welcome, can be pledged over three years, and have recognition opportunities including production and artist sponsorships.**

### **\$1,000,000+ — Angel Investors**

- Establish a cornerstone sustainability reserve
- Support multi-year programming and staffing
- Ensure Union Arts Center remains a permanent civic anchor

### **\$500,000–\$999,999 — Founding Investors**

- Build substantial reserves
- Enable year-round multi-venue activation
- Reduce long-term building risk and emergency disruptions
- Strengthen job stability across the organization

### **\$250,000–\$499,999 — Leadership Investors**

- Create a meaningful reserve “floor”
- Expand programming across more stages
- Accelerate rental revenue growth

### **\$100,000–\$249,999 — Sustainability Partners**

- Support critical preventative maintenance
- Fund multiple student matinees
- Strengthen staffing for longer runs and expanded activation

### **\$50,000–\$99,999 — Capacity Builders**

- Extend production runs
- Sustain in-school residencies & tour programming
- Launch rental infrastructure

### **\$25,000–\$49,999 — Momentum Gifts**

- Support immediate stabilization
- Offset urgent maintenance needs
- Boost audience growth through targeted marketing



**SUSTAIN  
OUR STAGES**



To learn more,  
please contact Tracy Reich,  
Director of Development, at  
[tracy.reich@unionartscenter.org](mailto:tracy.reich@unionartscenter.org)  
or call 206.259.9838

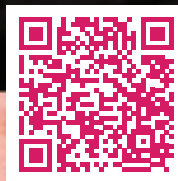


# frida

... a self-portrait



union arts center



written & performed by  
vanessa severo

directed by  
joanie schultz

**june 6 - 28**

Discover the heartbeat of your community at

# the **PULSE** of union arts center

PULSE is an artistic home created by youth, for youth (14-23) and for those who support rising creatives. New to Union Arts Center in 2026, PULSE offers FREE or PWYC skills development sessions, readings of plays by local playwrights, and community building spaces.

Weekly offerings include:

**Classes and workshops! Affinity groups! Script readings! Artist panels! Q&As! And more!**

Tap into your creative PULSE, every Sunday  
from 1-4pm at Union Arts Center.



# Union Arts Center Staff



## EXECUTIVE

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*Managing Director*

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Alyssa Montgomery  
*General Manager*

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Margaret Layne  
*Casting Director*

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*Box Office Lead*

Thalia Shelver  
*Box Office Representative*

Lillie Wirth  
*Box Office Assistant Manager*

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Annie Lareau  
*Institutional Giving Manager*

Tracy Reich  
*Director of Development*

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*Facilities Director*

Michael Maloy  
*Facilities Coordinator*

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*Controller*

Kevin Peterson  
*Staff Accountant*

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InterPlay

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Pacifica Law Group  
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*Marketing Coordinator*

Anisa Ishida  
*Director of Marketing & Communications*

Giao Nguyen  
*Digital Content & Communications Manager*

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*Patron Services Manager*

*Patron Services Staff*

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Omar Faust  
Karen Gillespie

Tam Inglese  
Truxton Ivory

Coco Justino  
Alfreda Lanier

Matthew Long-Rhyne  
Mel Longley

Kwan Lui  
Tracie Nettles

Ella Newborn  
Maryann Palmer

Markus Rook  
Mel Smith

Chris Sorensen  
Sharen Spencer

Katy Swensen  
Carole Sykes

Claudia Webb

**PEOPLE & CULTURE**

Astrid Riera  
*Director of People and Culture*

## PRODUCTION

Lisa Bellerio  
*Head Painter*

Meghan Boyle  
*Lead Scenic Carpenter*

Zachary Burns  
*Head Audio Technician*

Lucy Cavener  
*Costume Shop Assistant*

Kim Dancy  
*Head Cutter/Draper*

Nick Farwell  
*Stage Operations Supervisor*

Melissa Gomez  
*First Hand, Head Crafts Artisan,  
& Swing Dresser*

Cat V Kerr  
*Prop Shop Manager*

Emily Kight  
*Associate Production Manager*

Eric Koch  
*Technical Director*

Caitlin McCown  
*Director of Production*

Sally Mellis  
*Head of Wardrobe*

James Nichols  
*Head Stage Carpenter*

Todd Peacock-Preston  
*Head Props Artisan*

A G Quinn  
*Lead Props Artisan*

Jeff Scott  
*Scenic Charge Artist*

Marty Sisk  
*Swing Technician*

Logan Thomas  
*Head Electrician*

Jason Tribby  
*Head Scenic Carpenter*

Christine Tschirgi  
*Costume Department Manager*

Sergio Vivas  
*Lead Scenic Carpenter*

## FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Matthew Carleton  
*Interim Technical Director*

Joyce Degenfelder  
*Wigs & Hair*

Paige Demasi  
*Scenic Carpenter*

Adam Michard  
*Draftsperson*

K.D. Schill  
*Lead Dresser*

Kelsey Taylor  
*Props Artisan*

## SPECIAL THANKS

Seattle Rep

Seattle Opera

# Union Arts Center Board of Trustees



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*\*Ex-Officio*



# frida for all!

A community celebration of Mexican culture with music, dance, art, & food

June 14 | 3:30-6:30pm | Bullitt Cabaret | FREE



Join us for an afternoon at Frida's house!  
Bring your dancing shoes and your  
creativity to this fun family event!

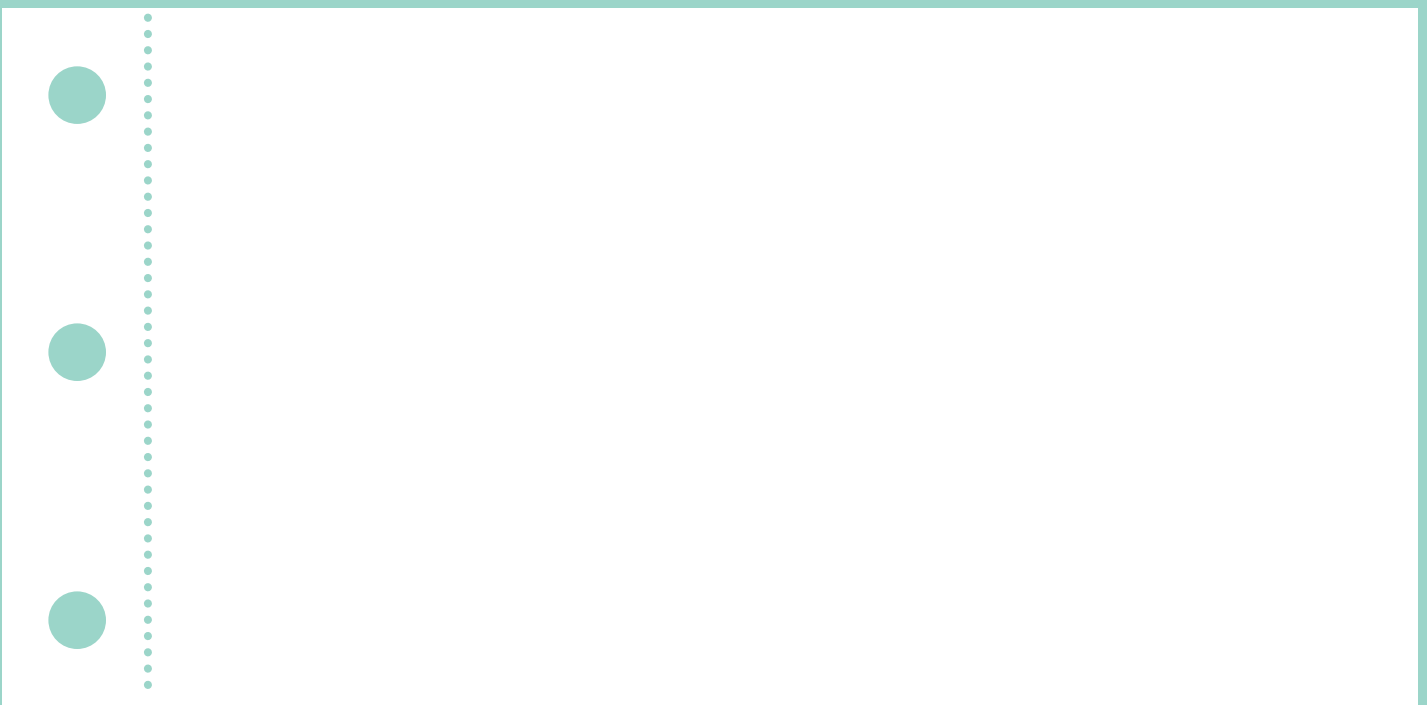
Participatory dance, live music, local  
food, and collaborative art-making  
with local artists and cultural  
organizations, plus a community  
discussion on Frida's legacy and  
resonance here in Seattle.

Produced in partnership with the  
Consulate of Mexico in Seattle, Seattle  
Opera, and NW Folklife.



# letters to yourself

*the aves* prompts us to think about ourselves – young, old, and everything in between. take a moment after the show (maybe in a park!) to reflect and write letters to your past and future self.



We're on the road!

# romeo & juliet

This spring, we're touring a bilingual Spanish/English production of **Romeo y Juliet** across Washington, bringing live theatre directly to schools statewide. Experiencing *Romeo y Juliet* live creates an immediate and lasting connection to the story. Powerful performances help students engage with Shakespeare's language, themes, and emotions in a way that feels accessible, relevant, and unforgettable.

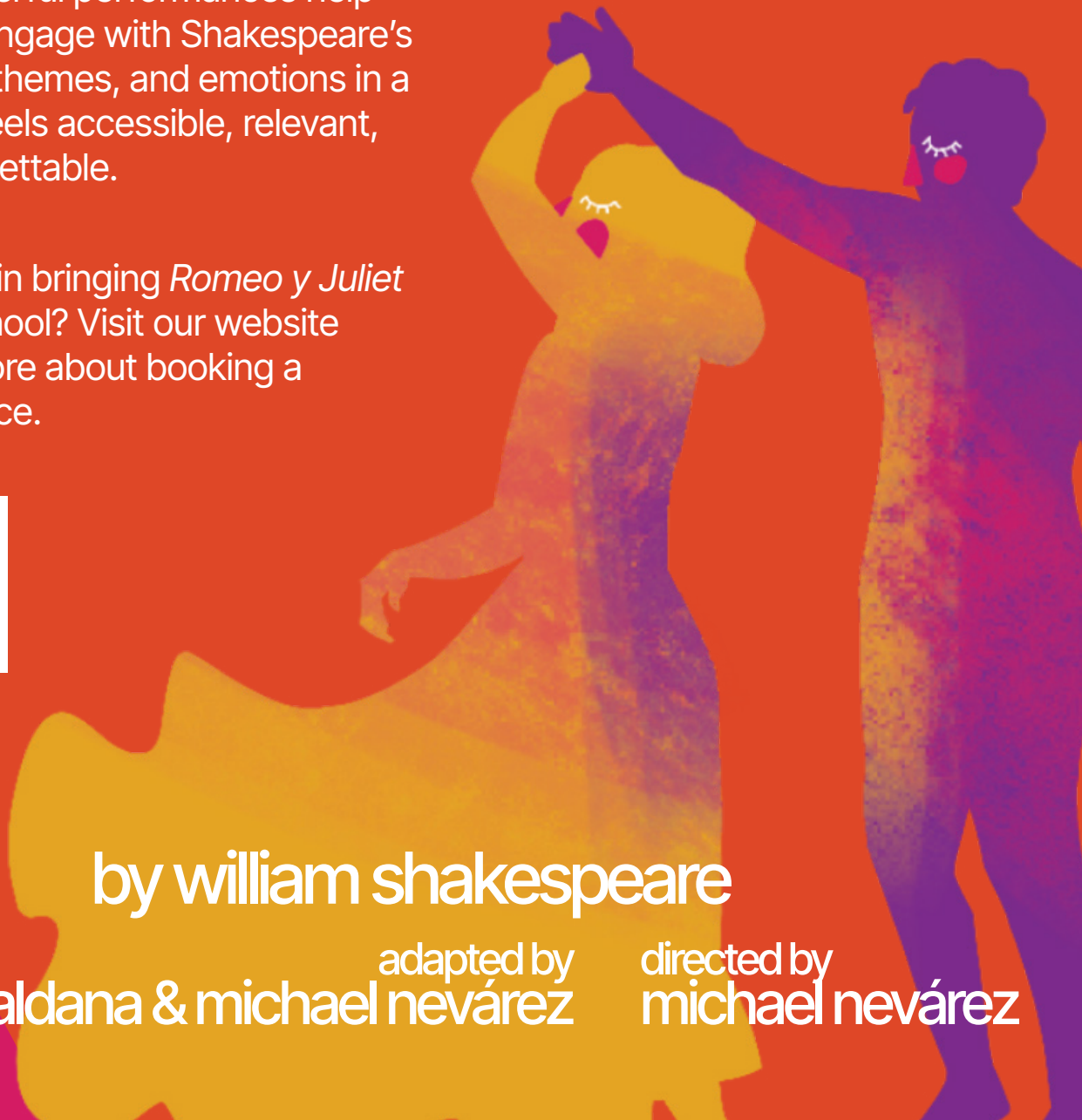
Interested in bringing *Romeo y Juliet* to your school? Visit our website to learn more about booking a performance.



by william shakespeare

adapted by  
alyssa saldana & michael nevárez

directed by  
michael nevárez





*Ironbound* at Seattle Public Theatre  
directed by Kelly Kitchens.

# The Things Our Mother Tells Us

An interview with director and creator Kelly Kitchens

BY DASH MONTAGUE

Being an artist doesn't start when earning your degrees or even at your first professional job, it starts with your mother reading stories to you. I learned this from chatting with renowned director, actor, arts educator, and creative, Kelly Kitchens. She is a professional director based in Seattle who works across the country, an Artist in Residence at the University of Washington, and an award-winning artist, including a two-time recipient of the Gregory Falls Award for Outstanding Director. >>

Below: Kelly Kitchens.

Right: Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, directed by Kelly Kitchens.



**Dash Montague:** Your career has evolved multidimensionally, including acting, directing, playwriting, and arts education. How did that all develop?

**Kelly Kitchens:** I've always loved stories. My parents would tirelessly read to my sister and I and that grew into me becoming this voracious reader, a hungry traveler through these magnificent worlds. They recognized early I had a storyteller's heart, even before I did. But growing up, our family's budget didn't have room for any extras; so my brilliant, resourceful, determined mother found ways to access the arts that were free to the public. And then one day she found free Shakespeare in the Park. Sitting on that blanket that beautiful summer evening I didn't understand every word they were saying—but I understood that there was a door to this whole new wide world opening up in front of me. And I just ran towards it...

I spent many years as an actor, telling stories as characters that were by turns deliciously complicated, silly, smart, devious, and so much more...After a while, I found myself sitting less in the dressing room during tech rehearsals and more out in the house watching brilliant directors and creative teams work magic together. I thought, "Wouldn't

that be thrilling, to actually help envision and build the world in which the story and the characters inhabit?". I couldn't believe my good fortune when some marvelous folks at companies I'd worked for as an actor and a teaching artist generously threw open the next beautiful door to another new world for me—they gave me the opportunity to direct. A little later, I had to pinch myself when the world of opera opened up to me—I remember telling them, "I know how to read music, but I certainly don't know how to sing," and they said, "You know how to tell a story. That's what matters."

And now, these many years later, all starting with my parents' love and support, carried forward by untold numbers of generous folks who make the arts accessible, remarkable teachers and mentors, arts leaders who trusted

me with so many opportunities, and the friendship of extraordinary fellow-artists, I have the boundless joy of this multi-faceted life in the arts.

**DM:** You have been described as an omnivore of theatrical genres, what fuels this passion to explore all the different edges of theatre?

**KK:** Oh my word there's just an unending volume and variety of stories out there and so many ways to tell them, isn't there? I'm endlessly fascinated by them. I feel like that little girl again with all those books yet to be read—so many worlds to explore...I get excited just thinking about what story, what style, what team, what adventure is waiting around the corner and what new doors might open next.



**DM:** What's one story that's next for you?

**KK:** I'm thrilled to be working with Rising Waters Collective on *dis-PLACE*, a contemporary chamber opera composed by Joan Magrané & Raquel García-Tomás with the libretto by Helena Tornero. It's a compelling, resonant story that explores how the search for home collides with the forces of gentrification through two intertwining stories separated in time but connected by place. I can't wait to work with Rising Waters Collective; they're a new company with the mission of creating bold, locally rooted chamber opera that amplifies stories of our region and embraces opera as a living art form—one that resonates with the struggles and hopes of our time while honoring its deep traditions.

BILL BREYMER

**DM:** Beyond putting on a great show, as an arts educator, what do you hope young people take away from working with you?

**KK:** So much! Where to begin? I hope to give them even in some part what was given to me by so many others. I hope I can help open doors that reveal new worlds in which they can revel, explore, create, grow. I hope to ignite their empathy and fuel their curiosity. I hope they continue to discover the wonder and the workings of the world and the folks around them throughout their lives. To ask the what, the how, the whys of things and to chase all those rabbits down the glorious paths those questions will lead...I hope to encourage their sense of play that they then sustain for a lifetime.

Through all the twists and turns life brings I hope they keep finding their joy, and the spirit of adventure of it all, all along the way. And I hope they continue to tell their stories—our community, our world, needs their stories—and I hope they continue to listen to and encourage the stories of others.

It started with stories that her mother would read to her and grew into a career where Kitchens connects people to one another, and to the world around them through storytelling. Her journey illustrates that supporting accessible arts for youth makes way for the art that we see on stage today.

**Dash Montague** is a high school freshman and first-year writer with the TeenTix Newsroom Program. He has written reviews on local shows, performed in musicals and operas, and been a major theatre and arts enthusiast for his whole life. He has attended so many shows with TeenTix, some box office attendants know him by name. He is particularly interested in investigating and promoting youth arts opportunities and productions around the region. He is very excited to see what else he will be able to write about during his time with TeenTix.

This article was written on special assignment for Encore through the TeenTix Press Corps, a teen arts journalism program run by TeenTix, a youth empowerment and arts access nonprofit organization.

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# Upcoming Events



Explore a full-season performing arts calendar at [encorespotlight.com](http://encorespotlight.com).

MOMIX will perform at Meany Center on April 24 & 25.

## April

### **Ain't Misbehavin'**

Taproot Theatre Company  
NOW-APRIL 18

### **Mary Jane**

Seattle Rep  
NOW-APRIL 19

### **Grease**

Village Theatre—Issaquah  
NOW-MAY 3

### **Robin Hood**

Seattle Children's Theatre  
NOW-MAY 10

### **Samantha Yun Wall**

Seattle Art Museum  
NOW-OCTOBER 4

### **Les Misérables**

Broadway at The Paramount  
APRIL 7-19

### **Hotel Gatsby—Masquerade**

Intiman Theatre  
APRIL 9-12

### **Walden**

ArtsWest  
APRIL 9-MAY 3

### **Appropriate**

Seattle Rep  
APRIL 9-MAY 10

### **Isaac Mizrahi**

Tacoma Arts Live  
APRIL 10

 **Steel Magnolias**

Renton Civic Theatre  
APRIL 10-26

 **Joyce Yang**

Meany Center for the Performing Arts  
APRIL 14

 **Coltrane 100: Both Directions at Once**

Seattle Theatre Group  
APRIL 14

 **The Orca Show**

Intiman Theatre  
APRIL 16-19

 **The Aves**

Union Arts Center  
APRIL 18-MAY 3

 **Double Shot Theater Festival**

Tacoma Arts Live  
APRIL 18-19

 **An Evening with Yo-Yo Ma**

Meany Center for the Performing Arts  
APRIL 22

 **Billy Goats Gruff and Other Tales**

Seattle Children's Theatre  
APRIL 23-MAY 17

 **The Fainting Spells**

Intiman Theatre  
APRIL 23-26

 **MOMIX**

Meany Center for the Performing Arts  
APRIL 24-25

 **The Empowerment Stage Dance Showcase**

Tacoma Arts Live  
APRIL 26

**May**

 **Carmen**

Seattle Opera  
MAY 2-17

 **Jesus Christ Superstar**

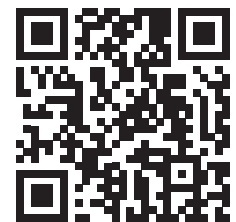
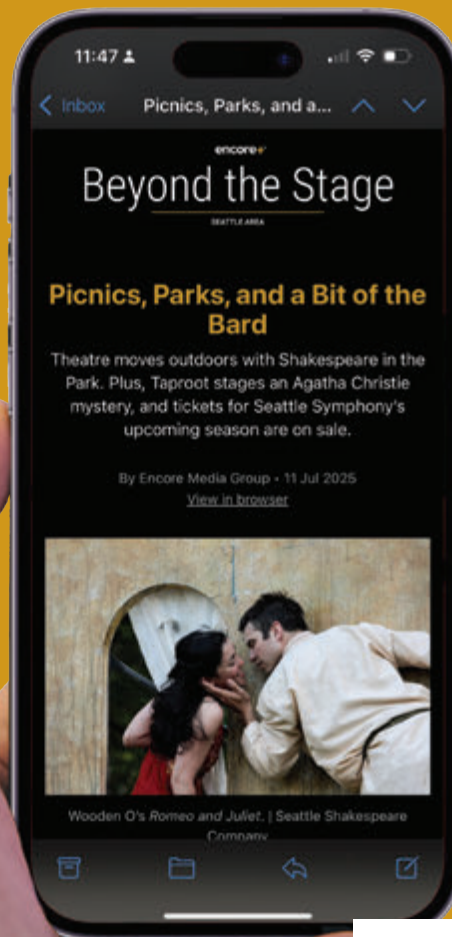
The 5th Avenue Theatre  
MAY 2-17

 **Fauxnique**

On the Boards  
MAY 7-9

# Finally, an email to look forward to on a Friday afternoon.

Subscribe to our newsletter for the best news and events from the Seattle area's performing arts scene, every Friday.





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# Accessible Performances

Here are a few of the accessible performances coming up in Seattle.


 **Ain't Misbehavin'**  
Taproot Theatre Company  
CLOSED CAPTIONED ON APRIL 15

 **Appropriate**  
Seattle Rep  
OPEN CAPTIONED ON APRIL 23 & 29



 **Carmen**  
Seattle Opera  
AUDIO DESCRIBED ON MAY 10


 **Les Misérables**  
Broadway at The Paramount  
AUDIO DESCRIBED ON APRIL 19


 **Billy Goats Gruff and Other Tales**  
Seattle Children's Theatre  
SENSORY FRIENDLY ON MAY 10


 **Grease**  
Village Theatre—Everett  
ASL INTERPRETED ON MAY 16




  **Saturday University: Why Get a Japanese Dragon Tattoo?**  
Seattle Asian Art Museum  
MAY 9


 **Grease**  
Village Theatre—Everett  
MAY 9–JUNE 7


 **Min Kwon**  
Meany Center for the Performing Arts  
MAY 12

 **From Eric Ewazen to Amanda Harberg**  
Seattle Symphony  
MAY 12

 **The Phantom of the Opera**  
Broadway at The Paramount  
MAY 13–24


 **Barefoot in the Park**  
Taproot Theatre Company  
MAY 13–JUNE 13


 **The Music of Jane Austen**  
Seattle Symphony  
MAY 15


 **An Evening with David Sedaris**  
Tacoma Arts Live  
MAY 15




Seattle Opera will stage *Carmen* from May 2 to 17.

**June**  
 **Aviatrix**  
Seattle Public Theater & Macha Theatre Works  
MAY 15–JUNE 7

 **We Ain't Ever Gonna Break Up: The Hymn and Parfunkel Musical**  
Village Theatre—Issaquah  
MAY 19–JUNE 21

 **All Lang**  
Pacific Northwest Ballet  
MAY 29–JUNE 7

 **Let's Misbehave: The Songs of Cole Porter**  
Seattle Symphony  
JUNE 5–7

 **Frida...A Self-Portrait**  
Union Arts Center  
JUNE 6–28

# Intermission Brain Transmission

Why stare at your phone for the hundredth time today when you could treat your brain to this scintillating trivia quiz? Better yet, send us your answer to the bonus question for a chance to win tickets to an upcoming performance.

1 Sheila Daniels will direct *The Aves* at Union Arts Center from April 18 to May 3. Daniels has directed productions at both Seattle Shakespeare and ACT Theatre before their merger into Union Arts Center. What was the most recent production she directed at Seattle Shakespeare?

- A *Hamlet*
- B *Romeo and Juliet*
- C *The Tempest*
- D *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

2 Intiman Cabaret will present *The Fainting Spells* from April 23 to 26. This production reimagines three classic comedies by Anton Chekhov: *The Proposal*, *Swan Song*, and *The Harmful Effects of Tobacco*. In addition to being a proficient writer, Chekhov held another profession. What was it?

- A Physician
- B Attorney
- C Teacher
- D Priest

3 Mark Morris Dance Group will perform at Meany Center from May 7 to 9. The Artistic Director and Founder, Mark Morris, is a Seattle native. While the group is now based in Brooklyn, the first performances under the Mark Morris Dance Group name were performed at which Seattle performance space?

- A The Moore Theatre
- B Meany Hall
- C McCaw Hall
- D On the Boards

4 Taproot Theatre will stage *Barefoot in the Park* from May 13 to June 20. This romantic comedy by Neil Simon premiered on Broadway in 1963. Which actor played the character of Paul in the original Broadway production?

- A Kurt Kaszner
- B Paul Newman
- C Richard Burton
- D Robert Redford

## BONUS

What's your favorite live performance that you've seen recently?

Sign up to our Encore+ newsletter ([www.encoreplus.app](http://www.encoreplus.app)) then email us at [info@encoremediagroup.com](mailto:info@encoremediagroup.com) with your answer for a chance to win tickets to an upcoming performance!

1. B—*Romeo and Juliet*  
2. A—Physician  
3. D—On the Boards  
4. D—Robert Redford

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