



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 14, 2018

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ArtsWest Announces 2018-19 Season: BEYOND IDEAS

SEATTLE, WA (May 14, 2018) - Artistic Director Mathew Wright today announced BEYOND IDEAS, ArtsWest's 2018-19 Season, with six productions – featuring plays by Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwrights, a soaring new version of a beloved classic, and a world premiere musical – all centered on the human need for connection in a time of increasing division and misunderstanding.

“This is a season about the heroic effort to connect,” said ArtsWest Artistic Director Mathew Wright. Drawing its name from a poem by the 13th Century Sufi mystic Rumi, Wright built the Season around stories that speak to our need to communicate and find understanding. “There's an ugly kind of power and reward we're rediscovering in talking *at* each other rather than *to* each other, and the temptation to do so feels like it grows stronger by the day,” said Wright. “What does it feel like to actually hear and see each other?” he asked. “Do we even know this feeling anymore?”

BEYOND IDEAS opens with the Seattle premiere of SKELETON CREW, OBIE Award-winning playwright Dominique Morisseau's poignant saga of Detroit auto workers set against the backdrop of the Great Recession.

For the holidays, ArtsWest is excited to debut a new, 10-person chamber version of the Tony Award-nominated musical JANE EYRE, based on the beloved novel by Charlotte Brontë with music and lyrics by Paul Gordon and book and additional lyrics by John Caird.

Next, from Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang, M. BUTTERFLY tells the captivating story of a French diplomat's decades-long affair with a man posing as a female Chinese opera star.

Two more Seattle premieres follow: JOHN, a quiet, eerily supernatural tale of a struggling couple by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Annie Baker; and OFFICE HOUR, Julia Cho's daring exploration of gun violence and theatrical form.

Capping off the BEYOND IDEAS Season is the world premiere of THE LAST WORLD OCTOPUS WRESTLING CHAMPION, a new musical from LIZARD BOY's Justin Huertas that weaves together myth, Puget Sound folklore, family, and transformation.

SKELETON CREW

September 20 - October 14, 2018

By Dominique Morisseau

OBIE and Steinberg Playwright Award-winning playwright

Time Magazine - 10 Best Shows of 2016

In the depths of the 2008 Great Recession, rumors of shutdown start to spread at one of Detroit's last auto-stamping plants, forcing a tight-knit family of workers to face a devastating question: what will you sacrifice to survive? In the spirit of August Wilson's Pittsburgh Cycle, award-winning playwright Dominique Morisseau's bold and compassionate new play lays bare the trials of the human spirit with verve, wit, and an electrifying voice of uncommon poetry.

JANE EYRE

November 15 - December 23, 2018

Music & Lyrics by Paul Gordon

Book and additional lyrics by John Caird
Adapted from the novel by Charlotte Brontë

Nominated for 5 Tony awards, including Best Musical
New 10-person Chamber version

When a spirited young orphan finds an unexpected home with a wealthy family, she also - against all odds and expectations - finds love. But strange voices from the attic and dark secrets from the past spark flames of fate that could consume them all. With sweeping music in a new chamber version of the celebrated musical, Charlotte Brontë's classic love story soars to life and introduces this trailblazing heroine to a new generation.

M. BUTTERFLY

January 24 - February 17, 2019

By David Henry Hwang

1988 Tony Award Winner - Best Play
1988 Drama Desk Award Winner - Outstanding New Play
1989 Pulitzer Prize Finalist

When we build fantasies to hide the truth, what happens when it all comes tumbling down? Clever parallels to the famous opera *Madame Butterfly* abound in this fearless play about a French diplomat who falls for a Chinese opera star: the ideal, exotic woman in his mind, but in reality, a man with a secret mission. Rich with deeper themes, M. Butterfly confronts the perception of Eastern culture by the West and the persistent romanticism that clouds it.

JOHN

March 14 - April 7, 2019

By Annie Baker

Time Magazine - 10 Best Shows of 2015
Nominated for 6 Drama Desk Awards
Nominated for 5 Lucille Lortel Awards

At a weekend bed & breakfast, the shadow of infidelity hangs over a young couple struggling to rebuild their relationship - when the elderly owner shares her own memories, ghosts real and imagined arrive to haunt the living. Blending keen realism with the eerily supernatural, this quiet tale from a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright is unafraid to seek beauty in one of the most startling places: the solitude of human experience.

OFFICE HOUR

May 2 - May 26, 2019

By Julia Cho

Susan Smith Blackburn Prize-winning playwright

Alarmed by his grisly writings, a professor invites a troubled student to her office to shed light on - and build a bridge across - the dark clouds that surround him. As the clock ticks down and tensions rise, she learns that notions of "good" and "bad" are dangerous illusions. A stirring call for empathy and a bold experiment in form, this searing play tackles thorny issues of gun violence, immigration, and "the other" to reveal our essential, human need for connection.

THE LAST WORLD OCTOPUS WRESTLING CHAMPION

June 20 - July 28, 2019

Books, music and lyrics by Justin Huertas

Gregory Award-winning playwright of LIZARD BOY

Senior year (and falling in love) is hard enough, but when the discovery of her mother's old trophy throws open the locked doors of the past, a young girl must reckon with a world turned upside down - and the arrival of strange new abilities that seem to hint at a destiny beyond her wildest imaginations. Taking rich threads of Puget Sound history and folklore, musical mastermind Justin Huertas weaves a thrilling modern myth of love, family, and transformation.

Tickets

A variety of subscription options, including ArtsWest's Marquee Club and Marquee Club Gold, are found online at www.artswest.org. Season subscriptions are available now with single tickets being offered by August 1.

About ArtsWest

ArtsWest is a vibrant center for both performing and visual arts located in the West Seattle Junction. This 149-seat theatre provides a unique setting for audiences and artists as stories of human emotion unfold in an intimate space. Winner of the American Theatre Wing's 2012 National Theatre Company Award, ArtsWest has produced such diverse work as GREEN DAY'S AMERICAN IDIOT, CHINGLISH, last fall's critically acclaimed production of Henrik Ibsen's GHOSTS and the smash hit PETER AND THE STARCATCHER. ArtsWest produces artistic events that provoke conversation, incite the imagination and use live theater as a powerful agent of change. www.artswest.org

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