



**THEATREWORKS SILICON VALLEY UNVEILS
48th SEASON INCLUDING
TWO WORLD PREMIERES, NEW HERSHEY FELDER
WORK, FIVE REGIONAL PREMIERES**
Company also offers first holiday added-attraction

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA (13 February 2017) – Theatre enthusiasts packed the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts tonight to hear Founding Artistic Director Robert Kelley and Managing Director Phil Santora of **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** unveil the lineup for the company’s 48th season. Among the exciting works announced were not one, but two World Premiere musicals: a new stage musical by the creator of *Wicked* inspired by an acclaimed DreamWorks film, and a groundbreaking work that was the hit of last summer’s New Works Festival. The season will also bring local audiences their first looks at: a London-New York hit drama, a rollicking globe-circling adventure for the holidays, the triumphant return of Hershey Felder in his newest hit production, a bold new American drama, a passionate look at McCarthyism, and one of Broadway’s most romantic musicals. For the first time, TheatreWorks will also stage an added holiday attraction. For more information or to purchase subscriptions (\$211 - \$567) the public can call **650-463-1960** or visit **theatreworks.org**. Subscriptions are on sale now; single tickets will go on sale in spring 2017. Special pricing is available for seniors (65+), educators, and patrons 35 and under.

TheatreWorks’ 48th season will kick off next summer with a hit from TheatreWorks 2016 New Works Festival, ***The Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga***. Drawn from one of the first ever graphic novels, set to an infectious ragtime and vaudeville score by local composer/lyricist Min Kahng, the comic musical follows four young Japanese men who land in San Francisco at the turn of the 20th century and pursue the American dream, despite limited options in the land of opportunity. The World Premiere of ***The Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga*** will segue into TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s **2017 New Works Festival**, at which leading playwrights and composers from across the country present developing work to audiences who attend book-in-hand readings and sing-throughs of new plays and musicals. Next up is the Regional Premiere of the London and Broadway hit,

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Constellations by Nick Payne, winner of the 2012 London Evening Standard Award for Best Play. This riveting contemporary romance uses physics as a launching pad, in a work lauded by *The New York Times* as “Supremely articulate. Gorgeous. Who knew that higher physics could be so sexy, so accessible — and so emotionally devastating?”

Next fall, TheatreWorks will play host to the World Premiere of ***The Prince of Egypt***, music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked, Godspell*), lyrics by Philip LaZebnik (*Pocahontas, Mulan*), directed by Scott Schwartz (*Golda’s Balcony; Jane Eyre; Bat Boy; Tick, Tick...Boom!*). This soaring celebration of the human spirit will feature a dazzling, multi-ethnic cast in one of the greatest stories ever told: the saga of Moses, his Pharaoh brother Ramses, and the indomitable people who changed them both forever. Inspired by the acclaimed DreamWorks Animation film, and featuring the Oscar-winning Best Song “When You Believe,” this breathtaking journey of faith and family will be presented in collaboration with Fredericia Teater, Denmark, where it will be staged in 2018.

For the holidays, TheatreWorks will present a rollicking, family-friendly voyage with the ingenious, hilarious, imaginative staging of ***Around the World in 80 Days***, adapted by Mark Brown from the Jules Verne classic. Five actors play dozens of characters, including fearless adventurer Phineas Fogg and his faithful valet, as they circle the globe in the 1870s, encountering stampeding elephants, raging typhoons, and runaway trains in a whirlwind described by the *Los Angeles Times* as “Witty in the extreme. A treat.” As previously announced, TheatreWorks will shake things up in 2017 by adding a second holiday show, ***The Santaland Diaries*** by David Sedaris presented in a limited three-week run at the Lohman Theatre in Los Altos Hills. Sedaris’ tenure at Macy’s as Crumpet the Elf is recounted in a subversive, delightfully sardonic solo turn that is recommended for mature audiences. In the New Year, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley will present the return of the acclaimed Hershey Felder, giving the Bay Area its first look at his newest stunning musical tribute, ***Our Great Tchaikovsky***. Debuted in San Diego last month, this bold study of the mystery surrounding some of history’s greatest music was hailed by the *San Diego Tribune* as “Stunning. Potent. His virtuoso touch brings beautiful life to Tchaikovsky.”

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In the spring, TheatreWorks has scheduled the regional premiere of a bold new drama, ***Skeleton Crew*** by Dominique Morisseau, in a co-production with Marin Theatre Company. Declared, “A very fine, deeply American play” by *The New York Times*, this funny, tough, and tender work is set in the midst of the Great Recession, following a makeshift family of auto plant workers.

April brings the long-awaited regional premiere of the soaring musical romance, ***The Bridges of Madison County***, book by Pulitzer Prize winner Marsha Norman, music/lyrics by Tony Award-winning composer Jason Robert Brown. Awarded the 2014 Tony for Best Musical Score, this sweeping tale of a devoted housewife’s four-day encounter with a roving photographer was declared “A ravishingly beautiful musical play” by *Newsday*. The season closes with the West Coast premiere of ***FINKS***, by Joe Gilford, set against the 1950s Red Scare as the House Un-American Activities Committee attacks “subversion” in the arts. Nominated for the Drama Desk Award for Best New Play, this stunning comic drama is based on the true story of comedian/actor Jack Gilford, written by his son.

Five productions will be mounted at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts and three will be staged at Palo Alto’s Lucie Stern Theatre. The added holiday production will be presented at the Lohman Theatre, on the campus of Foothill College in Los Altos Hills. In chronological order, the TheatreWorks Silicon Valley 2017/18 season is as follows:

A Timely New Musical
Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga

Book, Music, & Lyrics by Min Kahng
Based on *Manga Yonin Shosei* by Henry Yoshitaka Kiyama
Translated as *The Four Immigrants* by Frederik L. Schodt
Directed by Leslie Martinson

World Premiere
July 12 - August 6, 2017 (opening night: July 15)
LUCIE STERN THEATRE, PALO ALTO

From a tumultuous earthquake to an exhilarating world’s fair, this new musical chronicles the adventures of four Japanese immigrants in a world of possibility and prejudice: turn-of-the-twentieth-century San Francisco. Driven by an infectious vaudeville and ragtime score, the quartet pursues the American Dream despite limited options in the land of opportunity. This hit

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of TheatreWorks' 2016 New Works Festival, also developed at the company's 2014 Writers' Retreat, was adapted from one of the earliest mangas, a "documentary comic book" by Henry Kiyama (translated by Frederik L. Schodt) by Bay Area composer/lyricist Min Kahng, who was highlighted in *American Theatre Magazine* by Lily Janiak as one of the nation's "9 Musical Theatre Writers You Should Know."

A Contemporary Romantic Drama

Constellations

By Nick Payne

Directed by Robert Kelley

Regional Premiere

August 23 - September 17, 2017 (opening night: August 26)

MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

This London/New York hit offers a time-bending romantic journey spun out of string theory, exploring the infinite possibilities of "boy meets girl" with intelligence, heart, and humor. A charming beekeeper and a Cambridge cosmologist are nerds in love, for better and for worse, their relationship an ever-changing mystery of "what ifs." *Constellations* opened at London's Royal Court Theatre in 2012 and then transferred to the West End, where it was greeted as "Truly stellar" (*Evening Standard*), "playful, intelligent and bursting with ideas" (*Daily Telegraph*), "Beautiful and brilliant. Seldom has a play felt so exhilarating" (*Mail on Sunday*). It won the Evening Standard Award for Best Play, making 29-year-old Nick Payne the youngest-ever recipient of that award. The play made its US premiere on Broadway in January 2015, starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Ruth Wilson, and was hailed by Ben Brantley in *The New York Times* as "The most sophisticated date play Broadway has seen. Supremely articulate. Gorgeous. Who knew that higher physics could be so sexy, so accessible — and so emotionally devastating?" John Lahr in *The New Yorker* found it, "A singular astonishment, at once eloquent and mysterious."

Nick Payne has been called "one of the most dazzlingly gifted dramatists of a new generation" (*Vogue*), "undoubtedly one of the brightest sparks in our playwriting landscape." (*Evening Standard*), and "at the beginning of a great career" (*The New Yorker*). He was born in 1984, lives in Norwich, England, and is the author of the plays *If There Is I Haven't Found It Yet*; *Wanderlust*; *One Day When We Were Young*; and *Lay Down Your Cross*, among others.

A Timeless Musical Journey

The Prince of Egypt

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

Book by Philip LaZebnik

Directed by Scott Schwartz

World Premiere in collaboration with Fredericia Teater, Denmark

October 6 - November 5, 2017 (opening night: October 14)

MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

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A soaring celebration of the human spirit, this new musical features a dazzling, multi-ethnic cast in one of the greatest stories ever told: the saga of Moses, his Pharaoh brother Ramses, and the indomitable people who changed them both forever. Inspired by the acclaimed DreamWorks Animation film, it includes the Oscar-winning Best Song "When You Believe." This breathtaking journey of faith and family will be presented in collaboration with Fredericia Teater in Denmark, where it will be staged in 2018. The musical score and lyrics come from Stephen Schwartz, the Grammy and Oscar winning composer (*Wicked*, *Godspell*, *Pippin*), with book by screenwriter Philip LaZebnik (*Pocahontas*, *Mulan*). It will be helmed by multi-award-winning director Scott Schwartz (*Golda's Balcony*; *Jane Eyre*; *Bat Boy*; *Tick, Tick...Boom!*).

The Prince of Egypt was the first animated film produced and released by DreamWorks Pictures, with a cast that included Michelle Pfeiffer, Ralph Fiennes, Steve Martin, Martin Short, and a crew of 350 people from 34 nations. It won acclaim by critics and audiences, becoming the most successful non-Disney animated film released. One of the film's songs, "When You Believe" became a top single in a pop version released by Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey, and went on to win the "Best Original Song" Academy Award, garnering Schwartz his third Oscar.

A Hilarious Holiday Adventure

Around the World in 80 Days

Adapted by Mark Brown

From the novel by Jules Verne

Directed by Robert Kelley

Regional Premiere

November 29 - December 23, 2017 (opening night: December 2)

LUCIE STERN THEATRE, PALO ALTO

Stampeding elephants, raging typhoons, and runaway trains are only a few of the obstacles encountered by fearless adventurer Phineas Fogg and his faithful valet in this original "great race," circling the globe in the 1870s. In the hilariously theatrical style of *The 39 Steps*, five actors portray dozens of characters in a thrilling race against time and treachery. This adaptation by Mark Brown has been called "Fast-paced, unabashedly theatrical...an extremely pleasant surprise." (*The New York Times*), "A trip well worth taking." (*New York Post*) "Witty in the extreme. A treat." (*Los Angeles Times*).

An Added Attraction for the Holidays

The Santaland Diaries

By David Sedaris

Adapted by Joe Mantello

Directed by Jeffrey Lo

December 5 - 23, 2017 (opening night: TBD)

LOHMAN THEATRE, LOS ALTOS HILLS

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TheatreWorks breaks new ground in 2017 by adding a second holiday show to its season, with a limited three-week run of *The Santaland Diaries* at the intimate 180-seat Lohman Theatre. Sedaris' international career as a memoirist took off when he recounted his short tenure at Macy's as Crumpet the Elf in an essay he first read on NPR's *Morning Edition* in 1992. It was adapted by Joe Mantello into a stage production in 1996, which was hailed by *Newsweek* as "A sardonic, merrily subversive tale worth more than a photo album full of Santas." Recommended for mature audiences, *The Santaland Diaries* will be presented at the Lohman Theatre, located at Foothill College in Los Altos Hills. Tickets will initially be available to subscribers (\$39 general/\$20 students), with any remaining tickets offered to the general public next fall.

A Powerful Musical Tribute

Our Great Tchaikovsky

Music by Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Written and Performed by Hershey Felder

Directed by Trevor Hay

Regional Premiere

January 10 - February 4, 2018 (opening night: January 13)

MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Composer Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky springs to life through the hands and insight of piano virtuoso Hershey Felder, who presents a bold and engrossing story of culture and politics. From the unforgettable ballets *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker*; to the outrageous *1812 Overture* and his brilliant symphonic works, this powerful musical journey travels from Czarist times to today, bringing vivid life to a haunted genius. Felder has become an enormous Bay Area favorite; audiences packed the regional premiere of *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*, setting all-time box office records during its TheatreWorks run in January 2016. This new work premiered in January 2017 at San Diego Repertory Theatre, where it became the highest grossing show in the Rep's 41-year history and was hailed as "Stunning! Potent. A powerful, emotional experience well-worth seeing" (*San Diego Union-Tribune*), "Exquisite. Should not be missed" (*San Diego Reader*), and "Simultaneously beautiful and bittersweet. Felder is truly stunning" (*Broadway World*).

A Bold American Drama

Skeleton Crew

By Dominique Morisseau

Directed by Giovanna Sardelli

Co-produced with Marin Theatre Company

Regional Premiere

March 7 - April 1, 2018 (opening night: March 10)

LUCIE STERN THEATRE, PALO ALTO

In the midst of the Great Recession, a makeshift family of auto plant workers navigates the possibility of foreclosure in this funny, tough, and tender American drama. Rising star

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playwright Dominique Morisseau creates a world in which ambitious dreams and corporate deception interweave, pushing friendships to the limit. *Skeleton Crew*, which was a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn prize, debuted in January 2016 at Off-Broadway's Atlantic Theatre. Ben Brantley of *The New York Times* likened Morisseau to August Wilson, Clifford Odets, and Arthur Miller, and called the show, "A very fine new play, deeply moral and deeply American." Other critics agreed, including the *New York Post*, who wrote "Don't miss this intimate gem," the *New York Daily News*, which called it "A taut drama with vivid characters, keen-eared dialogue, and inside insights into this working class world. Built to last," and *The Huffington Post*, which declared it, "Unquestionably a strong, formidable work. Theatregoers won't want to miss." *Contains mature language.*

A Soaring Musical Romance

The Bridges of Madison County

Book by Marsha Norman

Music and Lyrics by Jason Robert Brown

Based on the Novel by Robert James Waller

Directed by Robert Kelley

2014 Tony Award Best Musical Score

Regional Premiere

April 4 - 29, 2018 (opening night: April 7)

MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

TheatreWorks will bring the Bay Area its first look at the 2014 Tony Award winner for Best Musical Score, a sweeping musical romance based on the 1992 best-selling novel by Robert James Waller. Set amidst the cornfields and picturesque covered bridges of Iowa in 1965, the musical follows an Italian war-bride whose safe but passionless world is shattered when she encounters a roving *National Geographic* photographer. The captivating book is by Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winning playwright Marsha Norman (*night Mother*, *The Secret Garden*, *The Color Purple*), with lush and luminous music and lyrics by Tony and Drama Desk Award winner Jason Robert Brown (*Parade*, *13*, *The Last Five Years*, *Honeymoon in Vegas*).

One of the best-selling books of the 20th century, *The Bridges of Madison County* spent three years on *The New York Times* bestseller list. In 1995 it was adapted into a film starring Meryl Streep and Clint Eastwood, earning Streep her 10th Oscar nomination. The musical opened on Broadway in January 2014, starring Kelli O'Hara and Steven Pasquale, earning O'Hara her sixth Tony nomination, winning Tony Awards for both Best Original Score and Best Orchestrations, as well as Drama Desk Awards for Outstanding Musical and Outstanding Orchestrations. It was greeted with critical acclaim, called, "A breathtaking sweep of feelings. Sumptuous," by *The New York Times*, with "A superb, thrilling score ... that brilliantly goes from torch song to blues and honky-tonk to virtual opera." by *The Associated Press*, which added, "The sophisticated, sumptuous score is cause for celebration." *The New York Post* applauded its "heartbreaking beauty. There is an affair to remember here."

An Extraordinary Musical Play

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FINKS

By Joe Gilford

Drama Desk Award Best Play Nominee

Directed by Giovanna Sardelli

California Premiere

June 6 - July 1, 2018 (opening night: June 9)

MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

In this lively drama, the 1950s Red Scare is in full swing, and the House Un-American Activities Committee is attacking “subversion” in the arts. When a romance blossoms between a rising comic and a firebrand actress, they face being blacklisted along with their friends and fellow artists – facing prospects that include losing their careers, or being branded forever as “finks.” Based on the true story of actor and comedian Jack Gilford, this stunning comic drama is written by his son, playwright/screenwriter Joe Gilford. *FINKS* received its New York premiere at Ensemble Studio Theatre in 2013, and was nominated for two Drama Desk Awards, as well as a nomination for Best New Play from the Off-Broadway Alliance. *The New York Times* called it, “A bracing play (that) quickly leaves you not caring that you’ve visited the territory before,” while *The Huffington Post* called it, “A testament to an indomitable spirit” and *Time Out New York* declared it, “a farsighted yet tender tribute, a nifty bit of theatre.” *Contains mature language.*

Since its founding in 1970, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley has become one of the nation’s leaders in cultivating and producing new musicals and plays, developing and premiering more than 67 works by new and veteran artists and more than 160 regional premieres. The company’s New Works Festival and Writers’ Retreat programs attract authors and composers of national stature (Beth Henley, Paul Gordon, Marsha Norman, Henry Krieger, Stephen Schwartz, Duncan Sheik, Joe DiPietro, and Andrew Lippa, among many others), providing an artistic home in which America’s theatre artists can create new works. In addition, the company has developed scores of works which have gone on to both regional and Off-Broadway productions. A home for artists developing new works, it was at TheatreWorks that *Memphis*, the 2010 Tony Award-winning musical, was first workshopped and received its world premiere.

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley is an Equity/LORT theatre, producing eight shows annually, playing to more than 100,000 patrons a year. TheatreWorks continues its dedication to the Bay Area community with increased audience services and subscriber benefits, Wednesday discussion nights, and opening night celebrations in which the community is invited to mingle

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with writers, cast, and crew. In addition, TheatreWorks offers many public services such as the costume rental program, and the education outreach program that reaches some 25,000 students annually with in-class workshops, student matinees, summer camps, the *Young Playwrights Project*, the acclaimed *Oskar* school tour, and the Children's Healing Project at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital.

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PERFORMANCES: Tuesdays at 7:30pm, Wednesdays at 2pm and 7:30pm, Thursdays and Fridays at 8pm, Saturdays at 2pm and 8pm, Sundays at 2pm and 7pm

WHERE: TheatreWorks at Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto
TheatreWorks at Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View
TheatreWorks at Lohman Theatre, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills, CA 94022

TICKETS: For information or subscriptions (\$211-\$567), the public can call **650-463-1960**, or visit **theatreworks.org**. Single tickets become available in spring 2017. Special pricing is available for seniors (65+), and patrons 35 and under.

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PHOTOS: For high res photos, please visit:
<http://www.cb-pr.com/press/twseason17-18.html>