



THEATREWORKS SILICON VALLEY PRESENTS
AN UPROARIOUS SPOOF
The 39 Steps

Adapted by Patrick Barlow

Based on the book by John Buchan

From the movie of Alfred Hitchcock

Directed by Leslie Martinson

August 21 - September 15, 2019 (*opening night: August 24*)

MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA (8 July 2019) — **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** continues its 50th Anniversary Season with the Olivier Award-winning comedy *The 39 Steps*. This hilarious, high-speed spoof of Alfred Hitchcock's silver-screen classic hurtles a notorious fugitive and a breathtaking blonde from a London music hall to Scotland's most remote highlands crawling with devious spies. With a mysteriously murdered agent, a wicked plot to destroy England, and a race against the clock to stop it, this brilliantly funny show is a tribute to the master's greatest films. Directed by Leslie Martinson, *The 39 Steps* features four fearless actors playing 139 roles, stretching the boundaries of theatrical invention. The riotous comedy will be presented **August 21-September 15, 2019** (*press opening: August 24*) at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro Street, Mountain View. For tickets (\$30-\$100) and more information the public may visit **TheatreWorks.org** or call **(650) 463-1960**.

The 39 Steps began as an adventure novel published in 1915 by John Buchan, and the first of five novels featuring Richard Hannay, an all-action hero with a stiff upper lip and a miraculous knack for getting himself out of sticky situations. The novel was adapted for film by Alfred Hitchcock in 1935 starring Robert Donat and Madeline Carroll. The film departed substantially from the book and introduced the two major female characters. In 1995 two writers based in the North of England, Nobby Dimon and Simon Corble, came up with a two-man version of *The 39 Steps* which toured with great success to small venues, based on both John Buchan's book and on the highly reputed 1935 Alfred Hitchcock film version. Celebrated English actor and comedian Patrick Barlow was commissioned to adapt the script for a larger production. His

adaptation debuted at London's Tricycle Theatre in August 2006 and was so successful it gained an immediate transfer to the West End, where it won the Olivier Award for Best New Comedy and ran for nine years. Its Broadway production by Roundabout Theatre Company was nominated for six Tony Awards including Best Play in 2008. The *New York Post* declared ***The 39 Steps*** "The most entertaining show on Broadway," and *The New York Times* called it "Absurdly enjoyable, gleefully theatrical...a perfect soufflé." TheatreWorks presented a wildly popular production in 2011, which set attendance records and was declared "A madcap homage that revels in full-throttle theatricality," by *The Mercury News*.

TheatreWorks has assembled a stellar cast for this production. **Lance Gardner** stars as Richard Hannay, the determined hero. Recently appearing as Reggie in *Skeleton Crew*, Gardner returns to TheatreWorks Silicon Valley where he also performed in *Proof*, *Superior Donuts*, *Auctioning the Ainsleys*, and *Anna in the Tropics*. Gardner has been seen on many Bay Area stages including Berkeley Repertory Theatre Marin Theatre Company, California Shakespeare Company, San Francisco Playhouse, Magic Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, and City Lights Theatre Company, among others. Returning to TheatreWorks Silicon Valley where she was seen in *Charley's Aunt*, **Annie Abrams** plays a series of characters including Anabella Schmidt, Pamela, and Margaret. Abrams's television credits include HBO's "True Blood," CBS's "How I Met Your Mother," and UPN/CW's "Veronica Mars," and she has performed at regional theatres including The Ahmanson Theatre, Laguna Playhouse and Ensemble Theatre Company.

Returning to TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, **Cassidy Brown** and **Ron Campbell** round out the cast as clowns, playing dozens of roles in the rollicking spoof. Reprising his role from TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's 2011 production of *The 39 Steps*, Brown was also featured in *Fallen Angels*, *The Loudest Man on Earth*, *Distracted*, and *Doubt, a parable*. Brown has also performed at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Center REpertory Theatre, and San Jose Stage Company. Recently appearing in TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's *Around the World in 80 Days*, Campbell also performed in TheatreWorks's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Peter and the Starcatcher*. He has appeared in some 150 productions regionally, at San Diego Repertory Theatre, Mark Taper Forum, The Old Globe Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory

Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, and more, as well as guest starring in many television series and films.

Patrick Barlow (Playwright) is an English actor, comedian, and playwright. His plays include an Olivier Award-nominated adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, a reframing of Milton's *Comus*, and a spoof of *Ben Hur*. His comedic alter ego "Desmond Olivier Dingle" is the Founder, Artistic Director, and Chief Executive of the two-man National Theatre of Brent, which has performed on stage, television, and radio since 1980. Barlow has appeared in major motion pictures including *Nanny McPhee*, *Bridget Jones's Diary*, *Notting Hill*, and *Shakespeare in Love*.

Sir Alfred Hitchcock was a celebrated English filmmaker and producer who pioneered many techniques in the suspense and psychological thriller genres. Over a career spanning more than half a century, Hitchcock fashioned for himself a distinctive and recognizable directorial style intended to draw viewers deep into the intrigue onscreen. His stories frequently featured fugitives on the run from the law alongside gorgeous leading ladies, surprising audiences with twist endings and thrilling plots. Hitchcock directed more than fifty feature films in a career spanning six decades. He is most widely celebrated for his films *Vertigo*, *Rear Window*, *North by Northwest*, *Psycho*, *The Birds*, and *To Catch a Thief*. A 2007 poll of film critics in Britain's *Daily Telegraph* declared "Unquestionably the greatest filmmaker to emerge from these islands, Hitchcock did more than any director to shape modern cinema, which would be utterly different without him. His flair was for narrative, cruelly withholding crucial information (from his characters and from us) and engaging the emotions of the audience like no one else."

Director **Leslie Martinson** is TheatreWorks's former Associate Artistic director, and served as a director and administrator at TheatreWorks for over thirty years. Recently helming *Frost/Nixon*, she has directed many hit productions at TheatreWorks, including *The Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga*, for which she received the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for Direction, as well as *Calligraphy*, *Proof*, *Water by the Spoonful*, *Warrior Class*, the Regional Premiere of *Time Stands Still*, the 2012 West Coast Premiere of *The Pitmen Painters*, and the company's acclaimed 2010 production of *Superior Donuts*. Other TheatreWorks directing credits include *The Grapes of Wrath* (co-directed with Artistic Director

Robert Kelley), the Bay Area Premiere of *Putting It Together*, and the West Coast Premieres of *The Boys Next Door*, *Brilliant Traces*, *If We Are Women*, *Theophilus North*, and *The Voice of the Prairie*. A graduate of Occidental College, Martinson was a Watson Fellow, a member of Lincoln Center Directors' Lab, a member of the La MaMa International Directing Symposium, and has served on Theatre Bay Area's Theatre Services Committee since 2002. In 2009, she was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship in Stage Direction from the Arts Council of Silicon Valley for artistic achievement and community impact.

Celebrating its 50th Anniversary Season, **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** is the recipient of the 2019 Regional Theatre Tony Award. With over 100,000 patrons per year, the Palo Alto-based theatre company has captured a national reputation for artistic innovation and integrity, often presenting Bay Area theatregoers with their first look at acclaimed musicals, comedies, and dramas, directed by award-winning local and guest directors, and performed by professional actors cast locally and from across the country.

For Calendar Editors:

WHAT: **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** continues its 50th Anniversary Season with the Olivier Award-winning comedy *The 39 Steps*. This hilarious, high-speed spoof of Alfred Hitchcock's silver-screen classic hurtles a notorious fugitive and a breathtaking blonde from a London music hall to Scotland's most remote highlands crawling with devious spies. With a mysteriously murdered agent, a wicked plot to destroy England, and a race against the clock to stop it, this brilliantly funny show is a tribute to the master's greatest films. Featuring four fearless actors playing 139 roles, *The New York Times* praised *The 39 Steps* as "Absurdly enjoyable, gleefully theatrical...a perfect soufflé."

WHEN: Previews: Wednesday, August 21 - Friday, August 23
Opening: Saturday, August 24
Closes: Sunday, September 15

SHOWS: Previews: 8:00pm
Tuesdays: 7:30pm
Wednesdays: 2:00pm, 7:30pm
Thursdays: 8:00pm
Fridays: 8:00pm
Saturdays: 2:00pm, 8:00pm
Sundays: 2:00pm, 7:00pm

WHERE: Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View

TICKETS: \$30-\$100; savings available for educators, seniors, active military, and patrons 35 and under. Single tickets are now available. Pricing subject to change.

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit theatreworks.org or call **(650) 463-1960**

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PRESS: Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co.
650.327.1200 | lauren@cb-pr.com

PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://www.cbpr.co/press/the39steps>