

**THEATREWORKS SILICON VALLEY STREAMS
MULTICULTURAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION**

Simple Gifts

Conceived, Crafted, and Directed by Tim Bond

Musical Direction by William Liberatore

Video Production by Stephen Muterspaugh

World Premiere

December 10-27, 2020

REDWOOD SHORES, CA (23 November 2020) – **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** will ring in the holiday season with *Simple Gifts*, a joyful, multicultural celebration of beloved holiday songs and traditions from many diverse backgrounds. TheatreWorks Artistic Director **Tim Bond** directs his first virtual production with this World Premiere work, crafted by Bond and a cast featuring a bounty of Bay Area theatre veterans. These gifted performers will share beautiful music, meaningful memories, and take audiences on a journey through a variety of winter celebrations, including Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Bodhi Day, Noche Buena, Diwali, Las Posadas, Winter Solstice, as well as exploring Christmas traditions from around the world. Presented as part of *TheatreWorks from Home*, *Simple Gifts* will be livestreamed **December 10-27, 2020**, with on-demand streaming available December 28, 2020 - January 1, 2021. Live post-show conversations with members of the cast will follow every performance. To accompany *Simple Gifts*, TheatreWorks will spotlight local organizations that give back to their communities throughout the year. Streaming access may be reserved with a donation of \$10 or more to support the 2019 Regional Theatre Tony-winning TheatreWorks Silicon Valley. Patrons may give viewing access to family or friends by donating to the company—every \$10 donated unlocks streaming access for one household. Streaming access is complimentary for current TheatreWorks subscribers, donors at the Inner Circle level (\$1,500) or above, and patrons who donated tickets for cancelled performances of TheatreWorks’s productions of *They Promised Her the Moon*, *Ragtime*, and *The Book of Will*. The public may gain streaming access to *Simple Gifts* starting Tuesday, December 1 at **TheatreWorks.org**.

Artistic Director Bond has assembled a talented cast of accomplished performers seen on leading stages including **Velina Brown, David Crane, Maya Greenberg, Michelle Jordan, Amy Lizardo, Bryan Munar, Sharon Rietkerk, Maya Sherer, Will Springhorn, Jr., Michael Gene Sullivan, and Adam Saucedo.**

Velina Brown returns to TheatreWorks where she performed in *Once on this Island* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. Brown is a collective member of the Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe, with whom she has been a principal actor and guiding force for more than 20 years. Brown has also been seen at leading regional theatres and is a two-time winner of the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle (SFBATCC) award. **David Crane** is another TheatreWorks favorite, who appeared in *Tuck Everlasting*, Stephen Schwartz's *The Prince of Egypt*, and the New Works Festival. He has also been seen at theatres around the Bay and in several BuzzFeed Motion Pictures videos. Making her TheatreWorks debut, **Maya Greenberg** has been seen at Los Altos Stage Company and Dragon Productions Theatre Company.

Michelle E. Jordan, a TheatreWorks veteran, received a Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for her performance in *Dreamgirls* at TheatreWorks, where she was also seen in *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues*, *Crowns*, *Go Down Garvey*, *Hi-Hat Hattie!*, *Shakin' the Mess Outta Misery*, and *Ain't Misbehavin'*. She has appeared in *Blues in the Night* with Maurice Hines and Freda Payne at the Post Street Theatre and in *Bricktop* at the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, and serves as the music director and staff minister of Center for Spiritual Living San Jose. Making her TheatreWorks mainstage debut, **Amy Lizardo** has performed with leading national theatres including Arena Stage, American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, California Shakespeare Theatre, San Francisco Playhouse, and Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. Making his TheatreWorks debut, **Bryan Munar** has been seen at San Francisco Playhouse, Center REPeritory Company, Palo Alto Players, and 42nd Street Moon, and was nominated for an SFBATCC Award for his performance in Novato Theater Company's *A Chorus Line*.

Recently seen in the World Premiere Musical *Pride and Prejudice*, **Sharon Rietkerk** returns to TheatreWorks where she won a SFBATCC Award for her performance in *Triangle*, a Theatre Bay Area (TBA) award for *Marry Me a Little*, received a SFBATCC Award nomination for her performance in *The Secret Garden*, and was also seen in *Cyrano*, *Little*

Women, and the 2015 production of *Jane Austen's EMMA*. Other awards include a TBA Award for *Born Yesterday* at Center REPeritory Company. Rietkerk has also performed at the Old Globe Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, 42nd Street Moon, and American Conservatory Theater, in concerts with the San Francisco Symphony, and in Streaming Musical's filmed theatrical production of *Emma*. Making her TheatreWorks debut, **Maya Sherer** has performed with Center REPeritory Company, Ray of Light Theatre, New Conservatory Theatre Center, and Berkeley Playhouse. Her film credits include AMC's *Fear of the Walking Dead*. **Will Springhorn, Jr.** returns to TheatreWorks where he was seen in *Snow Falling on Cedars* and *Peter and the Starcatcher*. Springhorn has also performed onstage at San Francisco Playhouse, San Jose Stage Company, Center REPeritory Theatre, Hillbarn Theatre, and Theatre Rhinoceros.

Michael Gene Sullivan has performed with TheatreWorks many times over the past 20 years, including in *Tuck Everlasting*, *Around the World in 80 Days*, *Cyrano*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *33 Variations*, *Violet*, and *Once on This Island*. Sullivan is also a resident playwright for the San Francisco Mime Troupe and has performed with the Denver Center Theatre Company, American Conservatory Theater, Marin Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, among others. Seen in TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's *Frost/Nixon*, **Adam Saucedo** has also performed with El Teatro Campesino, Pacific Repertory Theatre, and SCU Presents - Santa Clara University.

William Liberatore (Musical Director) is TheatreWorks's Resident Musical Director and has worked as a Choir Director at Gunn High School for more than 30 years. Liberatore has conducted more than 40 shows, including the World Premieres of *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Prince of Egypt*, and *The Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga*, as well as TheatreWorks's hit productions of *Tuck Everlasting*, *Fun Home*, *Rags*, *The Life of the Party*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Once on This Island* (TBA Award), *Crowns*, *Ragtime*, and *Pacific Overtures*. He has been a frequent recipient of the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for Best Musical Direction. Mr. Liberatore was the recipient of the Principal's Cup, Gunn's Teacher of the Year award, is an accomplished pianist and has served as the accompanist for the Coastal Region and California All-State Honor Choirs.

Tim Bond (Artistic Director) is the second Artistic Director in TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's 51-year history. Bond has served as Artistic Director for Seattle Group Theatre, where he curated the company's nationally recognized MultiCultural Playwrights Festival and was an Associate Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where he created the FAIR Program cultivating the next generation of diverse theatre artists and administrators. Bond also served as Producing Artistic Director at Syracuse Stage and most recently as full Professor at University of Washington's School of Drama, the last two years as Head of the Professional Actor Training Program. He has helmed a host of award-winning productions at theatres around the globe and served on the national boards of trustees for both Theatre Communications Group and ASSITEJ: The International Association of Theatre for Children and Young Audiences.

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley is the recipient of the 2019 Regional Theatre Tony Award. Led by Artistic Director **Tim Bond** and Executive Director **Phil Santora**, the Palo Alto-based theatre company serves more than 100,000 patrons per year and 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. The company's 51st season has been postponed in accordance with global efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

For Calendar Editors:

WHAT: TheatreWorks Silicon Valley will ring in the holiday season with **Simple Gifts**, a joyful, multicultural celebration of beloved holiday songs and traditions from many diverse backgrounds. This virtual World Premiere features a bounty of Bay Area theatre veterans, who will share beautiful music, meaningful memories, and take audiences on a journey through a variety of winter celebrations, including Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah, Noche Buena, Diwali and Las Posadas, and more.

WHEN: Tuesday, December 10 – Sunday, December 27, 2020

SHOWS: Thursdays: 7pm
Fridays: 7pm
Saturdays: 7pm
Sundays: 2pm
Post-show conversations with members of the cast follow every performance

ON-DEMAND: Available for on-demand streaming December 28, 2020 – January 1, 2021

WHERE: www.TheatreWorks.org TheatreWorks subscribers, donors at the Inner Circle level (\$1,500) or above, patrons who donated tickets for TheatreWorks's cancelled performances of *They Promised Her the Moon*, *Ragtime*, and *The Book of Will*, and patrons who reserve streaming access will be emailed a link to stream the program at home on their computer, SmartTV or other device.

TICKETS: Streaming access will be available to reserve on Tuesday, December 1.

The public may gain streaming access with a donation of \$10 or more to support TheatreWorks. Streaming access is complimentary for current TheatreWorks subscribers, donors at the Inner Circle level (\$1,500) or above, and patrons who donated tickets for cancelled performances of TheatreWorks's productions of *They Promised Her the Moon*, *Ragtime*, and *The Book of Will*.

Patrons may give viewing access to family or friends by donating to the company—every \$10 donated unlocks streaming access for one household.

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit theatreworks.org.

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PRESS: Contact Lauren Goldfarb, Carla Befera & Co.
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here:
<http://cbpr.co/press/simplegifts>