



## THEATREWORKS SILICON VALLEY RESCHEDULES IN-THEATRE PERFORMANCES, 51<sup>ST</sup> SEASON NOW SLATED TO BEGIN OCTOBER 2021

REDWOOD SHORES, CA (28 January 2021) — **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's** Artistic Director **Tim Bond** and Executive Director **Phil Santora** announced today that the Tony Award-winning theatre has postponed the opening of its 51st mainstage season to October 2021, with eight plays to be presented through August 2022. Said Bond, "The safety and well-being of our community is of paramount importance and while the pandemic continues, we understandably must delay in-person performances. But with the encouraging reduction in new cases and rollout of vaccinations, we can now look ahead and are very much looking forward to reopening our doors. We know the day will come when we can once again safely gather together, to celebrate the human spirit and share the power of live theatre."

Until the fall, TheatreWorks will continue to offer a wide roster of virtual performances, talks, classes, and more, including three World Premieres by **Hershey Felder** presented via livestream in February, March, and May 2021. More information and streaming tickets are available at **TheatreWorks.org**.

Upon the return to live performances, four mainstage productions will be mounted at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, three will be staged at Palo Alto's Lucie Stern Theatre, and one presented at a location to be announced. Subscriptions and single tickets will be available in coming weeks at **TheatreWorks.org**.

TheatreWorks's 51<sup>st</sup> Season will include: a World Premiere play developed in its 2019 New Works Festival, the Regional Premiere of a Jane Austen musical by Tony-nominated composer Paul Gordon, a contemporary fantasy-filled musical, a high-stakes environmental drama, a Tony-winning musical about the immigrant experience, an onstage adaption of a beloved holiday film, the return of acclaimed performer Hershey Felder with another musical masterpiece, and a poignant American classic. The upcoming season will mark Tim Bond's first at the helm following Founding Artistic Director Robert Kelley's retirement in June 2020. Bond, an award-winning, nationally acclaimed stage director, will direct one play and has invited Kelley to return to direct two of the season's musicals.

The season launches in fall 2021 with new indie folk-rock musical **Lizard Boy** (October 6-31, 2021). A cast of three actors plays myriad musical instruments from cello to ukulele to kazoo to tell this fresh comic book-infused tale of identity, acceptance, and saving the world. Through music and inventive

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staging, this wildly imaginative work set in modern-day Seattle - whose soundtrack has already captured more than one million streams on Spotify - follows the title character, sweet and insecure Trevor, as he embarks on a first date turned stunning mythological journey. *Lizard Boy* was commissioned by Seattle Repertory Theatre, where it debuted in 2015 to sold-out houses and swept the Seattle's awards season. It has continued to develop through productions at San Diego's Diversionary Theatre, staged readings at Playwrights Horizons, and was a recent favorite at the 2020 National Alliance for Musical Theatre Festival. The *San Diego Union-Tribune* called it "Innovative, funny, and wildly entertaining" as well as "Smart, tight, heartwarming, hilarious, and filled with theatrical surprises." *Stage Scene LA* deemed it "Thrillingly original. Electrifyingly inventive" and *BroadwayWorld* described it as a "New bit of awesomeness. A completely fresh and original show with wonderfully inventive staging." Featuring book, music, and lyrics by **Justin Huertas** and direction by **Brandon Ivie**, Huertas stars as Trevor with original cast members **Kirsten "Kiki" deLoehr Helland** and **William A. Williams**.

For the 2021 holiday season, TheatreWorks will present ***It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*** (December 1 - 26, 2021). This heartwarming holiday production, adapted by Joe Landry from the screenplay by Frances Goodrich, Albert Hackett, Frank Capra, and Jo Swerling, offers the beloved 1946 film as a 1940s era radio play, complete with live foley-style sound effects. Presented in the style of TheatreWorks favorites *The 39 Steps* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, five nimble actors take on dozens of roles, immersing audiences in the iconic story of George Bailey as he considers suicide on Christmas Eve, but discovers the enormous impact of his quiet life. ***It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*** has been applauded by media including *The New York Times*, which said the holiday play "added another layer of nostalgia. It's easy for the audience to get caught up in the fun of creating reality from obvious artifice." *The Chicago Sun-Times* deemed it "One of the best holiday shows around. This is a fresh and inventive way of reconnecting with a classic story of love and redemption," and *The Chicago Tribune* called it "A well-loved tale told with style, charm and a heart so big it could burst the ribcage of the harshest Grinch." This yuletide hit will be helmed by TheatreWorks Artistic Associate and Director of New Works **Giovanna Sardelli**.

The season's first two productions, ***Lizard Boy*** and ***It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*** will also be offered via video streaming, to allow patrons to watch either from home or in-theatre, making these shows accessible to additional audience members, including those unable or unready to attend in-person next fall. Additional information about viewing options will be available in the coming months at **TheatreWorks.org**.

TheatreWorks will ring in 2022 with TheatreWorks favorite Hershey Felder in the hit musical masterpiece ***Hershey Felder as Monsieur Chopin*** (January 19 – February 13, 2022), directed by **Joel Zwick**. Felder returns to the TheatreWorks stage as brilliant Polish composer Fryderyk Chopin,

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illuminating an exclusive piano lesson with this musical master. In this stunning solo show, the “Poet of the Piano” tells his romantic story while sharing dazzling performances of his compositions. **Hershey Felder as Monsieur Chopin** has delighted audiences across the country in critically acclaimed sold-out runs, with *The Mercury News* lauding Felder’s performance as “Enchanting... Genius seemed an apt description.” The *Chicago Sun-Times* called the show “emotionally charged and glorious,” while *The San Diego Union-Tribune* declared it “Inviting and absorbing. Full of vibrant life.” Felder’s prior productions at TheatreWorks have shattered box office records for the Silicon Valley theatre company, and his livestreamed remote performances have been further hits with virtual audiences. Prior to this live appearance, Felder will collaborate with TheatreWorks to livestream three World Premiere works: *Hershey Felder as Sholem Aleichem in BEFORE FIDDLER* (Feb. 7 – 14, 2021); *Hershey Felder, PUCCINI* (March 14 – 21, 2021); and *Hershey Felder as Sergei Rachmaninoff in ANNA & SERGEI* (May 16 – 23, 2021).

In spring 2022, TheatreWorks will present the Regional Premiere of the musical ***Sense and Sensibility*** (March 2-27, 2022). This sensational work features book, music, and lyrics by Paul Gordon, whose musicals include the World Premiere *Pride and Prejudice*, which broke TheatreWorks box office records in 2019, was streamed by 160,000 viewers in 14 countries worldwide on its April 2020 virtual debut, and is now available to watch on Amazon Prime Video. Gordon also penned TheatreWorks favorites *Jane Austen’s EMMA* and *Daddy Long Legs*, and the Tony-nominated Broadway musical *Jane Eyre*. Based on the Jane Austen novel, ***Sense and Sensibility*** follows sisters Elinor and Marianne Dashwood through their change in fortune after their father’s untimely death and ensuing romantic trials, events that test and affirm the bonds of sisterhood. While Elinor is prudent in matters of life and love, not revealing her heart’s true desire, Marianne is wildly impulsive, falling head-over-heels for a dashing but unscrupulous suitor. The charming musical’s World Premiere at Chicago Shakespeare Theater was called “nothing less than sublime” by *Chicago Daily Herald* and “a beguiling show that bursts with wit and heart” by *Chicago Sun-Times*. TheatreWorks Founding Artistic Director **Robert Kelley** returns to helm ***Sense and Sensibility***.

The season continues with Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winner August Wilson’s ***Gem of the Ocean*** (April 5 – May 1, 2022). This seminal classic will be directed by Artistic Director **Tim Bond**, a close friend of the late playwright and a leading interpreter of his work, who makes his TheatreWorks directorial debut with this play. The ninth work written in Wilson’s acclaimed American Century Cycle exploring the African American experience of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, ***Gem of the Ocean*** is set in 1904 in the Pittsburgh Hill District against the tempestuous backdrop of police violence and rioting. This lyrical epic takes place in the home of 285-year-old Aunt Ester, the community’s spiritual advisor and keeper of collective memory. Visited by a young Black man who wishes to atone for his sins and seek redemption, Aunt Ester takes him on a supernatural voyage aboard a slave ship called the Gem of the Ocean toward a mythical City of Bones, where he learns the truth of his ancestors’ history. After a

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World Premiere at Chicago's Goodman Theater, ***Gem of the Ocean*** opened on Broadway in 2004, where it was nominated for five Tony Awards including Best Play. *The New York Times* praised ***Gem of the Ocean*** for its "passages of transporting beauty" and said "Theatergoers who have followed Mr. Wilson's career will find in his 'Gem' a touchstone for everything else he has written. It is a swelling overture of things to come, a battle hymn for an inchoate republic of African Americans just beginning to discover the price of freedom." *Variety* lauded the play as a "slow-burning, powerfully spiritual drama." Regarding a recent production, *Chicago Tribune* claimed "It is impossible to watch 'Gem,' with its emphasis on the relationship of African Americans to police officers, without thinking about the numerous clashes that have raised questions of equality, morality, law-and-order and which lives matter the most."

"August was a dear friend of mine and his inspiring and beautiful play speaks to this current moment," said **Tim Bond** of producing ***Gem of the Ocean***. "With TheatreWorks's very first production in 1970—the musical *Popcorn*—Robert Kelley and his band of theatre artists rallied a community together through story and through the power of theatre. The issues of those times were not unlike the pressing concerns of today. Once again, we find ourselves in a time of uncertainty, loss, and a hope for a better world and I believe August's spiritual journey will help us on the path to answers."

TheatreWorks will then present ***Queen*** (dates in May 2022 and location to be announced). Written by San Jose-born emerging playwright Madhuri Shekar, whose *House of Joy* dazzled Bay Area audiences, this high-stakes environmental drama follows female PhD candidates Sanam from India and Ariel from the United States, who are on the brink of publishing groundbreaking research about the rapid global honeybee demise. When Sanam discovers that their numbers don't quite add up, she grapples with a moral dilemma: publish the paper and face humiliation if the truth is discovered, or stand by her scientific principles, ceding ground to an ecological disaster and jeopardizing her career and friendship. An Edgerton Foundation New Play Award Winner, ***Queen*** received its World Premiere at Chicago's Victory Gardens Theater, where it was nominated for a Joseph Jefferson Award for Best New Play. *Chicago Sun-Times* called it "A winning story about science, conscience, and the heart," while *Stage and Cinema Chicago* lauded it as "taut and truthful...a credit to our hive." It will be directed by **Jeffrey Lo**, who helmed TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's hits *The Language Archive* and *The Santaland Diaries*. Lo, who is also TheatreWorks's Casting Director, is an acclaimed local playwright as well as an in-demand director.

The season continues with the return of the hit musical ***Ragtime*** (June 1-26, 2022). Featuring a Tony Award-winning book by Pulitzer Prize finalist Terrence McNally (*Master Class*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *The Rink*) and a Tony Award-winning score by Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens (*Once on This Island*, *Anastasia*, *Seussical The Musical*), this musical is based on E. L. Doctorow's best-selling novel. This sweeping and stirring musical masterpiece paints a portrait of America at the dawn of the

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twentieth century, interweaving the lives of three families—White American, African American, and Jewish immigrant from Latvia—finding their places and pursuing the American Dream in a rapidly changing world. *Ragtime's* original 1998 Broadway production was declared a “A colossal hit” by the *New York Post* and received four Tony Awards. TheatreWorks’s 2002 production of *Ragtime*, directed by Founding Artistic Director **Robert Kelley**, received rapturous accolades with *The Mercury News* calling it “A masterpiece.” Kelley will return to direct this highly anticipated new production, originally scheduled for April 2020 and cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

TheatreWorks Artistic Associate and Director of New Works **Giovanna Sardelli** will close the season with the World Premiere of Jessica Dickey’s *Nan and the Lower Body* (July 13 – August 7, 2022), an audience favorite at TheatreWorks’s 2019 New Works Festival. When Pap smear inventor Dr. George Papanicolaou takes on a brilliant new assistant, Nan Day, he senses that she is hiding a secret. As Dr. Pap discovers the truth, he learns that he may hold the key to solving her greatest mystery. This frank and funny play explores the mysteries of the heart and provides a personal perspective to the revolutionary technology that has saved the lives of millions but caused moral dilemmas along the way.

In chronological order, the TheatreWorks Silicon Valley 2021/22 season is as follows:

## **Lizard Boy**

### **A New Musical**

**Book, Music, and Lyrics by Justin Huertas**

**Directed by Brandon Ivie**

**October 6-31, 2021 (opening night: October 9)**

**MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

Equal parts comic book lore, coming-of-age love story and irrepressible tunes, audiences should expect the unexpected in this sensational new indie rock musical. The fast-moving plot recounts the mysterious event that changed Trevor’s life forever, launching him into a life-long search for identity and acceptance. Is he a freak or a hero? Triple-threat artist Justin Huertas and his original cast take the stage for one fateful night of adventure, music, and love set on the streets of Seattle.

**Justin Huertas** is a Seattle-based, award-winning theatre artist whose works include *LIZARD BOY* (Seattle Rep, Diversionary Theatre, NAMT Festival), *THE LAST WORLD OCTOPUS WRESTLING CHAMPION* (ArtsWest Playhouse & Gallery), *HOWL'S MOVING CASTLE* (Book-It Repertory Theatre), and *LYDIA & THE TROLL* (set to premiere at Seattle Rep). Inspired by fairy tale, folklore, and comic books, his mission as an artist is to decolonize American mythos by creating original, Seattle-set modern-myth musicals that center Black, Brown, and Queer heroes. He has received recognition from Theatre Puget Sound Gregory Awards, BroadwayWorld Seattle Critic's Choice Awards, Seattle Theatre Writers Gypsy Rose Lee Awards, San Diego Critics Circle Craig Noel Awards, The Bret Adams & Paul Reisch Foundation Grant, and more, and is currently under commission at ArtsWest Playhouse & Gallery and The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

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# It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play

Adapted by Joe Landry

From the screenplay by Frances Goodrich, Albert Hackett, Frank Capra, and Jo Swerling

Directed by Giovanna Sardelli

December 1 – 26, 2021 (opening night: December 4)

LUCIE STERN THEATRE, PALO ALTO

America's favorite holiday classic is staged at a snowbound 1940s radio station, with every memorable character, wacky sound effect, and the heartwarming conclusion of the iconic film recreated live before the audience's ears—and eyes. With humor and humanity, George Bailey's tale of love, loss, and redemption mixes an exuberant cast and a wealth of seasonal songs into a radio days hit come to life. In the style of TheatreWorks favorites *The 39 Steps* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, five nimble actors take on dozens of roles in this heaven-sent gift for the entire family.

Joe Landry's plays include *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, *A Christmas Carol: A Live Radio Play*, *The 39 Steps: A Live Radio Play*, *War of the Worlds: A Panic Broadcast*, *Meet Me in St. Louis: A Live Radio Play*, *Reefer Madness*, *Vintage Hitchcock: A Live Radio Play*, *The Wicked Stage*, *Fake News!*, *Eve & Co.*, *Beautiful*, *Hollywood Babylon*, and *Numb*. Landry attended Playwright's Horizons/NYU, founded Second Guess Theatre Company in Connecticut, and is a member of the Dramatists Guild.

## Hershey Felder as Monsieur Chopin

By Hershey Felder

Music by Fryderyk Chopin

Directed by Joel Zwick

January 19 – February 13, 2022 (opening night: January 22)

MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

In a stunning tour de force performance, virtuoso actor/pianist Hershey Felder creates Fryderyk Chopin, the "Poet of the Piano," welcoming gifted students to his Paris salon on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, 1848. The students? The audience. Maestro Chopin hosts an intimate evening of enthralling music, sharing secrets of his little-known romances, exuberant personality, and intense vision of the art of the piano. The spirit and insight of a genius are brought to life onstage in this moving and entertaining production.

Named to Time Magazine's 2016 Top 10 Plays and Musicals, **Hershey Felder** has played over 6,000 performances of his self-created solo productions at some of the world's most prestigious theatres, consistently breaking box office records. American Theatre Magazine has said, "Hershey Felder is in a category all his own." His shows include: *George Gershwin Alone* (Broadway's Helen Hayes Theatre, West End's Duchess Theatre); *Monsieur Chopin*; *Beethoven*; *Maestro* (Leonard Bernstein); *Franz Liszt in Musik*; *Lincoln: An American Story*; *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*; *Our Great Tchaikovsky*; and *A Paris Love Story*. His compositions and recordings include *Aliyah*, *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*; *Fairytale, a musical*; *Les Anges de Paris, Suite for Violin and Piano*; *Song Settings*; *Saltimbanques for Piano and Orchestra*; *Etudes* *Thematiques for Piano*; and *An American Story for Actor and Orchestra*. Hershey is the adaptor, director and designer for the internationally performed play-with-music *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* with Steinway artist Mona Golabek; producer and designer for the musical *Louis and Keely: 'Live' at the Sahara*, directed by Taylor Hackford; and writer and director

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for *Flying Solo*, featuring opera legend Nathan Gunn. Hershey has operated a full-service production company since 2001, and in 2020 created a new brand, Live From Florence, that operates a “theatre at home broadcast company,” based in Florence, Italy. Previous broadcasts have included *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*; *Hershey Felder, Beethoven*; *Hershey Felder as George Gershwin Alone*; *Hershey Felder, Backstory – The Story Behind the Creation of Berlin, Gershwin & Bernstein*; and *Cooking French in Florence with Jeff Thickman & Hershey Felder*. The Hershey Felder Presents - *Live from Florence* 2020-21 Season of broadcasts include: *Hershey Felder as Claude Debussy in A PARIS LOVE STORY*; *Hershey Felder, TCHAIKOVSKY*; *Hershey Felder as Sholem Aleichem in BEFORE FIDDLER*; *Hershey Felder, PUCCINI*; and *Hershey Felder as Sergei Rachmaninoff in ANNA & SERGEI*. Felder has dazzled audiences at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, where regional premieres of *Our Great Tchaikovsky* and *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*, as well as the World Premieres of *Hershey Felder as Claude Debussy in A PARIS LOVE STORY* and *Hershey Felder: Beethoven* have set all-time sales and attendance records. *The Pianist of Willesden Lane*, for which Felder served as adaptor, director, and designer, was enjoyed by TheatreWorks audiences in early 2020.

## Sense and Sensibility

Book, music, and lyrics by Paul Gordon

Based on the novel by Jane Austen

Directed by Robert Kelley

Regional Premiere

March 2-27, 2022 (opening night: March 5)

LUCIE STERN THEATRE, PALO ALTO

Echoing his triumphant hits *Pride and Prejudice* and *EMMA*, Tony Award nominee Paul Gordon offers up a glorious musical version of *Sense and Sensibility*, Jane Austen’s beloved romantic masterpiece. With fortune lost to fate and passion lost to folly, two captivating sisters must sail the unpredictable seas of courtship and convention. Overflowing with intrigue and humor, this enchanting adaptation sparkles with unforgettable songs, stunning sets, and gorgeous costumes – a sensational new musical.

**Paul Gordon** (Book, Music & Lyrics) received a Tony Award nomination in 2000 for composing the music and lyrics for the acclaimed Broadway musical *Jane Eyre*, seen at TheatreWorks in 2003. Gordon penned the music, lyrics, and book for the World Premiere Musical *Pride and Prejudice* (TheatreWorks 2019) and the sensational TheatreWorks hit, *Jane Austen’s EMMA* (TheatreWorks 2007 & 2015), and the music and lyrics to the TheatreWorks holiday favorite *Daddy Long Legs* (2010 & 2016). In addition to offering streaming for TheatreWorks production of *Pride and Prejudice*, in 2020, Gordon streamed his musicals *EMMA*, *No One Called Ahead*, *Marry Harry*, and *Estella Scrooge* through Streaming Musicals. His other credits include writing music and lyrics for *Greetings From Venice Beach* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*. Gordon has written for and collaborated with numerous recording artists, including Bette Midler, Quincy Jones, Alanis Morissette, Smokey Robinson, and Dionne Warwick, has several hit songs to his credit, and is the recipient of nine ASCAP awards for songwriting.

## August Wilson’s Gem of the Ocean

Directed by Tim Bond

April 5 – May 1, 2022 (opening night: April 9)

MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

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Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winner August Wilson's American Century Cycle begins with this inspirational tale of transformation. Slavery is a living memory in 1904 when Citizen Barlow, a young man desperate for redemption and wracked with guilt, arrives at Aunt Ester's doorstep. A 285-year-old prophet and renowned "washer of souls," Aunt Ester sends him on a mystical journey of justice and freedom that is as urgent and as expansive as the soul of America. A close friend of Wilson and long-time interpreter of his work, Artistic Director Tim Bond brings spiritual music and vibrant theatricality to the TheatreWorks stage.

**August Wilson** authored *Gem of the Ocean*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (TheatreWorks 1989), *The Piano Lesson*, *Seven Guitars*, *Fences* (TheatreWorks 2000), *Two Trains Running* (TheatreWorks 1996), *Jitney*, *King Hedley II*, and *Radio Golf* (TheatreWorks 2008), all works exploring the heritage and experience of African Americans, decade-by-decade, over the course of the twentieth century. His plays have been produced all over the world, as well as on Broadway and have garnered awards including Pulitzer Prizes for *Fences* (1987) and *The Piano Lesson* (1990), a Tony Award for *Fences*, Great Britain's Olivier Award for *Jitney*, and eight New York Drama Critics Circle Awards, among many others. The cast recording of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* received a 1985 Grammy Award, and Mr. Wilson received a 1995 Emmy Award nomination for his screenplay adaptation of *The Piano Lesson*. He was an alumnus of New Dramatists, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a 1995 inductee into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and on October 16, 2005, Broadway renamed the theater located at 245 West 52nd Street - The August Wilson Theatre. Mr. Wilson was posthumously inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame in 2007.

## Queen

By Madhuri Shekar

Directed by Jeffrey Lo

**DATES IN MAY 2022 AND LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED**

What if all the bees abandoned their Queen? In this high-stakes environmental drama, best friends Sanam and Ariel, PhD candidates from India and the U.S., research the collapse of bee colonies worldwide, dreaming they might collapse the glass ceiling of academia. When a flaw emerges in their research, their friendship, careers, and even an arranged marriage are at risk. With ecological disaster on the horizon, should they withdraw their findings or compromise them to protect the planet?

**Madhuri Shekar's** plays include *House of Joy*; *Bucket of Blessings*; *Antigone, presented by the girls of St. Catherine's*; *Queen*; *In Love and Warcraft*; *A Nice Indian Boy*; and *Dhaba on Devon Avenue*. She has been commissioned by the Kennedy Center, South Coast Repertory, and Victory Gardens Theater, and her work has also been produced at The Old Globe, Center Theatre Group, Alliance Theater, the Hedgebrook Playwrights Festival (in conjunction with Seattle Repertory Theatre), Oregon Shakespeare Festival, California Shakespeare Theater, and EnActe Arts. Her honors include the Suzi Bass Award for Outstanding Original Work – Theatre for Young Audiences for *Bucket of Blessings* and she won the Kendeda Graduate Playwriting contest held by the Alliance Theatre for *In Love and Warcraft*. She is a 2018 alumna of the Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program at Juilliard. Shekar is a member of New Dramatists, an alumna of the Ma-Yi writers lab, the Ars Nova Play Group, and the Center Theatre Group Writers Workshop. Her audio play *Evil Eye* debuted on the Audible best-seller list in May 2019 and was named one of the "Best Audiobooks of 2019" by Audible. Shekar is also a co-creator of the Shakespearean web series, "Titus and Dronicus," and a staff writer for the upcoming HBO show "The Nevers," created by Joss Whedon.

## Ragtime

Book by Terrence McNally

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**Music by Stephen Flaherty, Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens**

**Based on the novel by E. L. Doctorow**

**Directed by Robert Kelley**

**June 1-26, 2022 (opening night: June 4)**

**MOUNTAIN VIEW CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

This timeless musical masterpiece celebrates the soaring sounds and hopeful spirit of America at the dawn of the last century. To the syncopated rhythms of a hopeful new age, this unforgettable theatrical tapestry interweaves the delights of vaudeville, baseball, and nickelodeon with the hurly-burly of labor rallies and racial unrest, tracing the lives of an enterprising Jewish immigrant, a courageous Harlem pianist, and a conflicted upper-class wife in a jubilant, inclusive tribute to the American Dream.

One of the theatre world's first victims of COVID-19, Terrance McNally was called "one of the greatest contemporary playwrights the theater world has yet produced" by *The New York Observer*. His prolific career in the theatre includes the plays *Master Class* (TheatreWorks 2000); *Frankie and Johnny in the Claire de Lune*; *Love! Valour! Compassion*; *It's Only A Play*; *Mothers and Sons*; *The Ritz*; and *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*, and the books for musicals *Ragtime* (TheatreWorks 2002), *Kiss of A Spider Woman* (TheatreWorks 1997), *The Visit*, *The Full Monty*, *The Rink* (TheatreWorks 1987), and *Anastasia*. His films include adaptations of his plays *Love! Valour! Compassion*, *The Ritz*, and *Frankie and Johnny*, as well as his Emmy Award-winning *Andre's Mother*, *The Last Mile*, and *Common Ground* (written with Paula Vogel and Harvey Fierstein). McNally was a four-time Tony Award winner for his plays and recipient of the Dramatists Guild Lifetime Achievement Award. An acclaimed songwriting team, **Lynn Ahrens** and **Stephen Flaherty** have created award-winning musicals including *Ragtime* (TheatreWorks 2002), *Once On This Island* (TheatreWorks 1993 and 2014), *Seussical*, *Anastasia*, *My Favorite Year*, *Lucky Stiff*, *Rocky*, and *A Man of No Importance*. Ahrens and Flaherty won Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Awards for *Ragtime*, an Olivier Award for *Once On This Island*, and an Outer Critics Circle Award for *A Man of No Importance*. The pair has also received nominations for two Academy Awards and two Golden Globes for their score for the Twentieth Century Fox feature film *Anastasia*, and Grammy nominations for *Ragtime* and *Seussical*.

## **Nan and the Lower Body**

**By Jessica Dickey**

**Directed by Giovanna Sardelli**

**World Premiere**

**July 13 – August 7, 2022 (opening night: July 16)**

**LUCIE STERN THEATRE, PALO ALTO**

A pioneering doctor wants a full-time successor. A loving husband wants a full-time family. And Nan wants it all. She is the brilliant lab assistant of good-humored Dr. Papanicolaou, the life-saving inventor of the Pap smear. In this frank, funny, and engaging audience favorite from TheatreWorks's 2019 New Works Festival, Nan has mysteries to unravel and life-changing choices to make. But who can unwind the mysteries of the heart?

**Jessica Dickey's** (Playwright) most recent plays are *The Convent* (premiered Off-Broadway with Rattlestick and Rising Phoenix) and *The Rembrandt* (sold-out run at Steppenwolf starring John Mahoney). Other plays Off-Broadway in New York and around the country: *The Amish Project*, *Charles Ives Take Me Home*, and *Row After Row*.

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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. In June 2019, **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** received the Regional Theatre Tony Award, the highest honor bestowed on an American theatre not on Broadway. In June 2020, Founding Artistic Director **Robert Kelley** retired after 50 years at the helm of the theatre he founded, ending what is believed to be the longest tenure of an Artistic Director at a League of Resident Theatres (LORT) theatre. The 51<sup>st</sup> season will mark the first season for Artistic Director **Tim Bond**. With a storied career in theatre spanning more than three decades, Bond has directed award-winning productions nationally and internationally, and earned a national reputation for inclusion and diversity advocacy. He is one of the world's leading interpreters of the works of August Wilson, has enjoyed academic tenure at leading universities, and brings experience as an Artistic Director, Associate Artistic Director, and Producing Artistic Director at leading theatres including Syracuse Stage and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

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 70 works by new and veteran artists and 173 Regional Premieres. The company's New Works Festival and Writers' Retreat programs attract authors and composers of national stature (Rajiv Joseph, Stephen Schwartz, Beth Henley, Paul Gordon, Marsha Norman, Henry Krieger, Duncan Sheik, Jules Feiffer, 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. It was at TheatreWorks that the 2010 Best Musical Tony Award-winner *Memphis* was first workshopped and received its World Premiere. Stephen Schwartz's musical *The Prince of Egypt*, based on the DreamWorks movie of the same name, also made its World Premiere at TheatreWorks and debuted in London's West End in 2020.

In 2021, TheatreWorks in partnership with Hershey Felder Presents *Live from Florence* is offering three World Premiere livestreamed works by virtuoso pianist **Hershey Felder**. Audiences will have access to "front row seats" via at-home viewing of three brand new works as the acclaimed playwright/performer presents *Hershey Felder as Sholem Aleichem in BEFORE FIDDLER*, presented live 5pm PST, Sunday, February 7, 2021 (with streaming on-demand access through February 14), followed by *Hershey Felder, PUCCINI* presented live 5pm PST, Sunday, March 14, 2021 (with streaming on-demand access through March 21), and *Hershey Felder as Sergei Rachmaninoff in ANNA & SERGEI* presented live 5pm PST, Sunday, May 16, 2021 (with streaming on-demand access through May 23). More information and streaming tickets are available at **TheatreWorks.org**.

*THEATREWORKS 51st SEASON*

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For more information the public can visit **theatreworks.org**. Subscriptions and single tickets will be available in the coming months.

**PERFORMANCES:** Tues 7:30pm, Wed 2:00pm & 7:30pm,  
Thurs/Fri 8:00pm, Sat 2:00pm & 8:00pm, Sun 2:00pm & 7:00pm

**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

**TICKETS:** For information the public can visit **theatreworks.org**. Subscriptions and single tickets will become available in the coming months.

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**PHOTOS:** For high res photos, please visit: <http://www.cbpr.co/press/twseason21-22>