



PUBLIC RELATIONS
& MARKETING

FOOTHILL THEATRE ARTS PRESENTS
LAUREN GUNDERSON'S LOVE LETTER TO THE THEATRE
THE BOOK OF WILL

November 5 - 21, 2021

Lohman Theatre, Los Altos Hills

LOS ALTOS HILLS, CA (14 October 2021) – Multi award-winning Foothill Theatre Arts presents Lauren Gunderson's joyous celebration of theatre, ***The Book of Will***, performing live on stage three weeks only, **November 5 – 21, 2021** (*press opening: Saturday, November 6*) at the Lohman Theatre, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. Director Bruce McLeod helms a cast of notable locals in this unabashed ode to the magic of theatre. *All audience members must show proof of vaccination and remain fully masked while in the theatre.* Tickets (\$10 - \$25) and information are available at www.foothill.edu/theater or by calling (650) 949-7360.

Prolific Bay Area-based Lauren Gunderson, one of the most sought-after playwrights in the country, serves up a fast-paced drama that ponders “What if Shakespeare’s works were lost forever?” This rollicking work finds William Shakespeare’s colleagues three years after his death, suddenly realizing that the bard’s immortal words will disappear when the actors who had them memorized die off. Only fragments, butchered copies, and what’s left in living memories, remain of the playwright’s prodigious output. In this celebration of love, tenacity, and the healing power of theatre, the group sets out to collect all of Shakespeare’s plays into what became known as the First Folio. Tackling a devious publisher, a cantankerous competitor, and other unsurmountable obstacles, a doughty band of true friends illuminate this funny and moving tale of love, loss, and laughter.

Premiering at The Denver Center for the Performing Arts, ***The Book of Will*** won the 2018 Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Association New Play Award and has since been performed around the country. It has been lauded by critics as “Delightful” (*Chicago Daily Herald*), “Wonderful entertainment...hilarious and poignant” (*Chicago On Stage*), and “Terrific comedy” (*Chicago Tribune*). The *Boulder Weekly* called it “In a word, a triumph,” adding “it is, quite frankly, one of the best plays I have ever seen. It will bring tears of both laughter and sorrow to all but the most jaded audience member’s eyes.”

Playwright **Lauren Gunderson** has twice been recognized as America's most produced living playwright, receiving national acclaim for an extensive body of work that also includes the plays *Silent Sky*, *The Revolutionists*; *Exit, Pursued By A Bear*, and many others. She co-authored *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* with Margot Melcon, one of the most produced plays in America in 2017, followed by its companion piece *The Wickhams*.

Foothill Theatre Arts has assembled a powerhouse cast for this entertaining thought-provoking drama including veteran actors drawn from the greater Bay Area, as well as students from Foothill College. The cast includes **Anthony Silk** (John Heminges), **Michael Rhone** (Henry Condell), **John Musgrave** (Richard Burbage/William Jaggard), **Jason Morley** (Ben Johnson), **Eiko Yamamoto** (Elizabeth Condell), **Carla Befera** (Rebecca Heminges), **Gwendolynne Wagner** (Anne Hathaway), **Sara Dean** (Emilia Bassano), **Lauren D'Ambrosio** (Alice Heminges), **Steve Allhoff** (Isaac Jaggard), **Olivia Spreen** (Boy Hamlet), **Sydney Harmon** (Susanna Shakespeare), **Giovanni Garcia** (Town Crier), and understudied **Leslie Newport** and **Louie Leon**. Costumes are by **Lisa Rozman**, Scenic Design by **Yuseke Soi**, Projections by **Steven Gerlach**. Assistant Director is **Missy Lyons**, and Stage Manager is **Ellie Schwartz**.

Director **Bruce McLeod** joined the Foothill College Theatre Arts department in 2007 for the opening of the Lohman Theatre. He is responsible for the Theatre Technology Program and serves as the department's Production Manager and Technical Director. He has worked professionally at many theatres including the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and was the first technical director and production manager for TheatreWorks, where he oversaw site-specific productions of *Cabaret* (downtown Fire Station, now Avenidas), *Macbeth* (Baylands Nature Center) and *Everyman* (various churches). He also boasts a long career as a set and lighting designer in the Bay Area including work with Center Rep, West Bay Opera, Magic Theatre, Eureka Theatre and TheatreWorks. Several of his set designs have received recognition, including the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for *Sunday in the Park with George* and a Theatre Bay Area nomination for the recent *Marry Me A Little* at TheatreWorks. At Foothill he has directed critically acclaimed productions of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches*, *Our Town*, *It Can't Happen Here*, *She Kills Monsters*, and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*.

For Calendar Editors:

WHAT: Multi award-winning Foothill Theatre Arts presents Lauren Gunderson's joyous celebration of theatre, ***The Book of Will***, directed by Bruce McLeod, a fast-paced drama that ponders "What if Shakespeare's works were lost forever?" This rollicking work finds William Shakespeare's colleagues three years after his death, suddenly realizing that the bard's immortal words will disappear when

the actors who had them memorized die off. Only fragments, butchered copies, and what's left in living memories, remain of the playwright's prodigious output. In this celebration of love, tenacity, and the healing power of theatre, the group sets out to collect all of Shakespeare's plays into what became known as the First Folio. Tackling a devious publisher, a cantankerous competitor, and other unsurmountable obstacles, a doughty band of true friends illuminate this funny and moving tale of love, loss, and laughter.

WHEN: November 5 – 21, 2021
Press opening: 8pm, Saturday, November 6

DAYS/TIMES: Fridays/Saturdays, 8 pm
Thursdays, Nov. 11 & 18, 7:30 pm
Sundays, Nov. 14 & 21, 2pm

WHERE: Lohman Theatre, Foothill College
12345 El Monte Rd (I-280 & El Monte Road), Los Altos Hills, CA

FREE parking is available in Student Parking Lot 1 or Lot 8. Foothill College is located off I-280 on El Monte Road in Los Altos Hills.

TICKETS: Preview (Fri, Nov 5): \$10
Thursdays: \$15
Fridays/Saturdays/Sundays: \$25 regular, \$15 student, \$10 youth under 15
Available at: <https://foothill.edu/theatre> or by phone at (650) 949-7360

SAFETY: *All audience members must show proof of vaccination before entering and remain fully masked while in the theatre.*

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

PHOTOS: High res photos are available at: <http://cbpr.co/press/book-of-will>