

THEATREWORKS SILICON VALLEY PRESENTS

Ragtime

Book by Terrence McNally

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

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA (2 May 2022) — **TheatreWorks Silicon Valley** continues its 51st season with the hit musical *Ragtime*. This sweeping and stirring musical masterpiece paints a portrait of America at the dawn of the twentieth century, interweaving the lives of three families—an African American family, a Jewish Immigrant family, and a wealthy white family—finding their places and pursuing the American Dream in a rapidly changing world. 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 of the same name. *Ragtime* will be presented **June 1-26, 2022** (press opening: June 4) at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts. For tickets (starting at \$30) and more information the public may visit **TheatreWorks.org** or call **(877)-662-8978**.

Ragtime’s original 1998 Broadway production was deemed “A colossal hit” by *New York Post* and received four Tony Awards. Seen on stages across the globe, *Seattle Times* called a recent production of the musical “still relevant today,” proclaiming “If racism and anti-immigrant bigotry, desperate poverty and corrupted wealth are in the headlines today, *Ragtime* is a compelling reminder that they are part of America’s DNA.” Founding Artistic Director **Robert Kelley** will helm *Ragtime* once again—he was lauded for his direction of the hit production at TheatreWorks in 2002, which *The Mercury News* called “A masterpiece.”

TheatreWorks has assembled a phenomenal cast for *Ragtime*. Broadway actor **Leo Ash Evens** returns to TheatreWorks as Tateh, a Jewish immigrant seeking to make a new life for himself and his daughter. He has performed on Broadway in productions of *Shuffle Along*, *School of Rock*, and *Jesus Christ*

Superstar, and appeared in *West Side Story* in London's West End as well as the 50th anniversary tour. His Off-Broadway credits include *FINKS* at Ensemble Studio Theatre and *The Secret Life of Bees* at Atlantic Theatre Company. Returning to TheatreWorks after being seen in *FINKS* and *Somewhere*, Evens has regionally performed with The Old Globe, Theatre Under the Stars, and Pittsburgh Musical Theater, among others.

Broadway actor **Christine Dwyer** makes her TheatreWorks debut as Mother, a wealthy white woman from New Rochelle. Starring on Broadway as Elphaba in *Wicked*, Dwyer has also performed leading roles in the national tours of *Waitress*, *Finding Neverland*, *Wicked*, and *RENT*. She was seen Off-Broadway in *New Hopeville Comics*, and in *Murder Ballad* at Studio Theater. Dwyer's television and film credits include NBC's "Jesus Christ Superstar Live" and Sony Pictures' *Sleep No More*. **Noel Anthony** plays Father, an affluent white man. He returns to TheatreWorks Silicon Valley after his recent turn as Colonel Brandon in *Sense and Sensibility*. Anthony has been seen in many TheatreWorks productions, including the World Premiere of *A Little Princess*, as well as *Rags*, *The Secret Garden*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Jane Eyre The Musical*, and *Merrily We Roll Along*, as well as several New Works Festivals. Anthony won San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle (SFBATCC) and Shellie Awards for his performance in *She Loves Me* as well as Shellie Awards for his performances in *The Music Man* and *Les Misérables*. He has starred in leading roles at many local theatres including American Conservatory Theater, Broadway By the Bay, Marin Theatre Company, Center REpertory Company, Diablo Theatre Company, American Musical Theatre of San Jose, and has performed with Alameda Civic Light Opera and Symphony Silicon Valley.

Broadway actor **Nkrumah Gatling** makes his TheatreWorks debut as Coalhouse Walker Jr., an African American pianist living in Harlem. Gatling has been seen on Broadway in *Hair* and *Miss Saigon*, and he appeared in the national tour of *Porgy and Bess*. He was also in the New York City Center Encores! production of *Cabin in the Sky*, and has performed regionally at Goodspeed Musicals, Kennedy Center, Signature Theatre in Virginia, Arden Theatre, Second Stage Theatre, Hollywood Bowl, and Theatre Under the Stars. His TV credits include CW TV's "Gossip Girl." **Iris Beaumier** makes her TheatreWorks debut as Sarah, an African American woman drawn to Coalhouse's ragtime tunes. Beaumier's film/ TV roles include Amazon Studios's "Modern Love," Comedy Central's "Alternatino with Arturo Castro," NBC's "Blindspot," and CBS's "Instinct." She has performed at regional theatres including La MaMa, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, and Ars Nova.

Sean Okuniewicz makes his TheatreWorks mainstage debut as Younger Brother, Mother's brother who is looking for a sense of purpose in a changing world. Seen in TheatreWorks' *Oskar* School Tour and understudying the role of Crumpet in *The Santaland Diaries*, Okuniewicz has performed at American Conservatory Theater, San Jose Stage Company, Hillbarn Theatre, City Lights Theater Company, Broadway by the Bay, and Center REpertory Company. Recently performing as Lord John Middleton in *Sense and Sensibility*, **Colin Thomson** returns to TheatreWorks as Grandfather, a cantankerous white man uneager to see change, and Henry Ford, the founder of the Ford Motor Company. Appearing in TheatreWorks' *Tuck Everlasting*, *The Light in the Piazza*, and *All My Sons*, Thomson has also performed at American Conservatory Theater, Portland Center Stage, San Jose Stage Company, 42nd Street Moon and in Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Ground Floor, and can be seen in Sony Pictures' *Blue Jasmine* (directed by Woody Allen) and in NBC Universal's *Trauma* (directed by Jeffrey Reiner).

Michael Gene Sullivan, who has performed with TheatreWorks many times over the past 20 years, will return to portray Booker T. Washington, a prominent African American leader. Playing The Man in the Yellow Suit in *Tuck Everlasting*, Sullivan has also been seen at TheatreWorks in *Simple Gifts*, *Around the World in 80 Days*, *Cyrano*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *33 Variations*, *Violet*, and *Once on This Island*. A 2022 Guggenheim Fellow, 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. Recently seen as Fanny Dashwood in TheatreWorks' *Sense and Sensibility*, **Melissa WolfKlain** plays Evelyn Nesbit, a scandalous vaudeville star. WolfKlain's previous TheatreWorks performances also include the streaming production of *Shakespeare in Vegas*; World Premiere of *Pride and Prejudice*; the World Premiere of *Tinyard Hill*, for which she was nominated for a SFBATCC Award; and TheatreWorks New Works Festival workshops of *Pride and Prejudice*, *Caraboo*, and *Asphalt Beach*. She won a Theatre Bay Area (TBA) Award for *Dames at Sea* at 42nd Street Moon as well as SFBATCC Awards for her appearances in Broadway by the Bay's *Singin' in the Rain* and *Crazy for You*. Seen in the national tours of *White Christmas* and *42nd Street*, WolfKlain has also performed at regional theatres including San Francisco Playhouse, Hillbarn Theatre, and Arizona Repertory Theatre, and her film and TV credits include FOX TV's "America's Most Wanted" and Lifetime's "The Truth about Jane."

Broadway actor **Suzanne Grodner** returns to TheatreWorks as anarchist Emma Goldman. Grodner performed on Broadway and in the national tour of *Beautiful The Carole King Musical* and also acted in

Broadway's *The Rose Tattoo* and *Bye Bye Birdie*. She was also seen in the national and European tours of *The Phantom of the Opera* and the regional tour of *Brighton Beach Memoirs*. Her Off-Broadway credits include Manhattan Theatre Club's *Sarah, Sarah; Old Jews Telling Jokes*; and *Cakewalk*. Seen at TheatreWorks in *The Great Pretender, Peter and the Starcatcher, Jane Austen's Emma, Twentieth Century, Into the Woods*, and *Living Out*, Grodner has appeared in productions at regional theatres including The Old Globe, San Francisco Playhouse, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Asolo Repertory Theatre, and Indiana Repertory Theatre, and has acted in TV's "Ray Donovan," "Law & Order," "ED," and more. **Keith Pinto** returns to TheatreWorks as famed magician Harry Houdini and fire chief Will Conklin. A multi-disciplinary artist, Pinto composed *Currency* with Bay Area Theatre Cypher, seen in TheatreWorks' 2021 New Works Festival Online, and is co-founder of the award-winning hip hop band and theatre company, Felonious. Pinto was seen in the National and European tours of *Fame the Musical*, and has performed at FringeNYC and Joe's Pub. In the Bay Area, he was seen in TheatreWorks' *Fly by Night*, as well as performing at theatres including American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco Play House, San Jose Stage Company, Center REpertory Company, 42nd Street Moon, Shotgun Players, Campo Santo, and Hillbarn Theatre.

Leslie Ivy and **Rodney Earl Jackson Jr.** make their TheatreWorks debuts as Sarah's Friend and Matthew Henson respectively. Ivy has performed at San Francisco Playhouse, San Jose Stage Company, Ray of Light Theatre, Los Altos Stage Company, Broadway by the Bay, African-American Shakespeare Company, Hillbarn Theatre, Foothill Music Theatre, and Pear Theatre. She won a TBA Award for her performance in Hillbarn Theatre's *The Color Purple* and was nominated for a BroadwayWorld Award for her performance in Hillbarn Theatre's *Ragtime*. Ivy's film credits include Fox Searchlight Films's *Phat Girlz*. Jackson was seen on Broadway in *Motown* and *The Book of Mormon*, and performed in the National Tour of *Ain't Too Proud to Beg – The Life and Times of The Temptations, Motown*, and *The Book of Mormon*. The Artistic Director and Co-Founder of SFBATCO, Jackson has also performed regionally at American Conservatory Theater, SFBATCO, San Francisco Playhouse, New Conservatory Theatre Company, and Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera.

Jackson Janssen and **Joshua Parecki** make their TheatreWorks debuts as Little Boy. Janssen has performed with Children's Musical Theatre of San Jose. Parecki's credits include performances with Palo Alto Players, West Valley Light Opera, and Bay Area eTc Main Stage, and training with American Conservatory Theater, Broadway Artist Alliance, and Hillbarn Conservatory. **Ruth Keith** and **Sydney Walker Freeman** return to TheatreWorks as Little Girl. Seen as Small Alison in TheatreWorks' *Fun*

Home, Keith has also performed in productions with San Francisco Playhouse and American Conservatory Theater. She has trained with American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Young Actors' Theatre Camp, and Ruth Asawa San Francisco School of the Arts High School. Freeman performed with TheatreWorks as Thomas Tuck in *Tuck Everlasting*, and has also been seen at StarStruck Theatre. Her training includes work with StarStruck Theatre, Young Actors' Theatre Camp, and Bay Area Children's Theatre.

Ragtime features music direction by **William Liberatore**, assistant direction by **Katherine Hamilton**, choreography and associate direction by **Gerry McIntyre**, scenic design by **Wilson Chin**, associate scenic design by **Christopher Fitzer**, costume design by **B Modern**, lighting design by **Pamila Z. Gray**, and sound design by **Jeff Mockus**. **Taylor McQuesten** serves as stage manager, with **Emily Anderson Wolf** and **Chloe Schweizer** as assistant stage managers. **Maya Herbsman** serves as intimacy coordinator and production EDI consultant with **Jeunée Simon** as assistant intimacy coordinator. **Judith Nihei** is the artist counselor, **Jonathan Rider** is the fight director, and **Kimberly Mohne Hill** serves as dialect coach.

Called "one of the greatest contemporary playwrights the theater world has yet produced" by *The New York Observer*, **Terrence McNally**'s prolific six-decade 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 is a four-time Tony Award winner for his plays and recipient of a 2019 Lifetime Achievement Tony Award and a Dramatists Guild Lifetime Achievement Award. He died in March 2020, one of American theatre's first casualties to COVID-19.

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*.

Robert Kelley (Director) is TheatreWorks' Founder. In 2020, Kelley retired from his post as Founding Artistic Director, where he served as artistic head of the company since its inception in 1970. During his 50 seasons at the helm of the Tony-winning regional theatre, he directed more than 175 TheatreWorks productions, including many world and regional premieres. In 2003 Kelley was honored with the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle (SFBATCC) Paine Knickerbocker Award for Lifetime Achievement, in 2016 was awarded the Jerry Friedman Lifetime Achievement Award from the SFBATCC, and in 2019 he received a TBA Legacy Award. Kelley received a TBA Award for his direction of *Daddy Long Legs* and SFBATCC Awards for Outstanding Direction for his productions of *Pride and Prejudice*, *Jane Eyre*, *Into the Woods*, *Pacific Overtures*, *Rags*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Another Midsummer Night*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, and *Caroline, or Change*.

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley was founded in 1970 by Robert Kelley and has grown from an original Silicon Valley start-up to become one of the region's leading professional nonprofit theatre companies. TheatreWorks was honored as the recipient of the 2019 Regional Theatre Tony Award, the highest honor bestowed on a non-Broadway theatre. Now in its 51st season and led by Artistic Director **Tim Bond** and Executive Director **Phil Santora**, TheatreWorks presents a wide variety of contemporary plays and musicals, revitalizes great works of the past, and serves more than 100,000 patrons per year. TheatreWorks also champions new work, offering artists support and a creative home as they develop new stories for the American theatre. Offstage, TheatreWorks' arts education programs in local schools and arts engagement programs in Silicon Valley neighborhoods uplift its audiences and strengthen community bonds. Whether onstage or off, TheatreWorks seeks to celebrate the human spirit and the diversity of the Silicon Valley community.

Media sponsor for TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's 2021/2022 season is San Francisco Chronicle.

For Calendar Editors:

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pursuing the American Dream in a rapidly changing world. 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. **Ragtime's** original 1998 Broadway production was declared a "A colossal hit" by the *New York Post* and received four Tony Awards. TheatreWorks' 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.

WHEN: Previews: Wednesday, June 1 – Friday, June 3, 2022
Opening: Saturday, June 4, 2022
Closes: Sunday, June 26, 2022

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

WHERE: Live performances at **Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts**, 500 Castro Street, Mountain View

TICKETS: Ticket prices start at \$30; savings available for educators, seniors, and patrons 35 and under. Pricing subject to change.

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit **theatreworks.org** or call **(877)-662-8978**

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