

**THE MARSH BERKELEY PRESENTS
WORLD PREMIERE
LOOK INTO FATHER/SON RELATIONSHIPS
SEEING STARS**

5:00pm Saturdays, June 1 – July 13, 2024

BERKELEY, CA (26 April 2024) — **Steve Budd**, award-winning actor, writer, and storyteller, acclaimed for his solo shows *What They Said About Love* and *What They Said About Sex*, returns to **The Marsh Berkeley** with the world premiere of his newest one-man show *Seeing Stars*. Hailed as an “ingenious storyteller” by *East Bay Express*, Budd now highlights his personal relationship with his father. This heartfelt and hilarious mashup of personal storytelling and documentary theater describes what happens when the wish that a loved one would “change overnight” comes true, with unsettling consequences. When Steve moves back in with his parents as an adult, he finds himself wishing his father were different, less distant and gruff, more alive and engaged, only to find he is in for a big surprise. Based on a true story, *Seeing Stars* is a profound and riotous exploration of family dysfunction, mental illness, and one man's deep desire to connect with his dad. *Seeing Stars*, performed by Steve Budd and directed by **Mark Kenward**, will be presented 5:00pm Saturdays, June 1 – July 13, 2024, (*Press Opening: 5:00pm, Saturday, June 8*) at **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. For tickets (\$20-\$35 sliding scale, \$50 and \$100 reserved) or more information, the public may visit themarsh.org.

Development performances of *Seeing Stars* were enthusiastically received by audiences at the 2024 San Francisco Playground Solo Performance Festival, the 2023 San Francisco Fringe Festival, and at the Hollywood Independent Theater Festival in Los Angeles. In script form, it was recognized as an official selection at the 2022 Big Apple Film Festival Screenplay Competition and as a semifinalist at the 2020 Scriptapalooza Screenplay Competition. For his previous works, *Theatrius* praised Budd for his “manic and irrepressible charm,” while *Berkeleyside* lauded him as “a skilled actor who controls the stage with grace.”

ABOUT THE CAST AND CREATIVES

Steve Budd (Writer/Performer) is an actor, writer, storyteller, and award-winning solo performer based in Oakland, California. Originally from the Boston area, he has trained at The Marsh and The Groundlings in Los Angeles. Budd has performed with various theater companies, including San Francisco Playhouse, Custom Made Theatre Company, New Conservatory Theatre Center, and Marin Shakespeare Company. His solo show *What They Said About Love* was recognized as a Top 5 Solo Show by *Theatre Bay Area*.

Mark Kenward (Director), a director with extensive experience, has directed over 40 full-length solo shows, including 10 at The Marsh. His repertoire includes productions such as *Steve Seabrook: Better Than You* by Kurt Bodden, *Rambo: The Missing Years* by Howard Petrick, and *Hey, Hey, LBJ!* by David Kleinberg, among others. Kenward has also directed award-winning shows like Wayne Harris's *Tyrone 'Short Leg' Johnson and Some White Boys* and David Caggiano's *Jurassic Ark*, both of which received Best of San Francisco Fringe honors. Additionally, he was awarded a 2019 TBA CASH grant to develop and produce a festival of performances by formerly incarcerated individuals, leading to the creation of the Formerly Incarcerated People's Performance Project (FIPPP), which he co-produces and directs. Kenward previously served as Managing Director and Director of Artist Relations at The Marsh from 2015 to 2019.

ABOUT THE MARSH

The Marsh is known as “a breeding ground for new performance.” Launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, it annually hosts more than 500 performances across the company's two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh's specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “solo performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest.” *The East Bay Times* named The Marsh one of the Bay Area's best intimate theaters, calling it “one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible.” In April 2020, The Marsh launched its digital platform MarshStream and hosted more than 700 live streams which provided 300 performers and its youth class participants a platform to continue discovering, developing, and producing art during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. Today, The Marsh presents both in-person live performances and content on its MarshStream, continuing to expand its reach to audiences onsite and around the world. The Marsh believes in the power of people's storytelling and has several classes for the public to create their own works as well as through its developing work performance series: Monday Night Marsh, Tell It on Tuesday, and Marsh Risings. The theater company also collaborates with over 25 San Francisco public schools providing a year-round youth program serving students at its theater and in the classrooms.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: **Steve Budd**, award-winning actor, writer, and storyteller, acclaimed for his solo shows *What They Said About Love* and *What They Said About Sex*, returns to **The Marsh Berkeley** with the world premiere of his newest one-man show *Seeing Stars*. Hailed as an “ingenious storyteller” by *East Bay Express*, Budd now highlights his personal relationship with his father. This heartfelt and hilarious mashup of personal storytelling and documentary theater describes what happens when the wish that a loved one would “change overnight” comes true, with unsettling consequences. When Steve moves back in with his parents as an adult, he finds himself wishing his father were different, less distant and gruff, more

alive and engaged, only to find he is in for a big surprise. Based on a true story, *Seeing Stars* is a profound and riotous exploration of family dysfunction, mental illness, and one man's deep desire to connect with his dad.

Seeing Stars is:

Written and performed by Steve Budd

Directed by Mark Kenward

WHEN: **June 1 – July 13, 2024**
No performance: June 22, 2024
Press Opening: 5:00pm Saturday, June 8, 2024

SHOWS: 5:00pm Saturdays

WHERE: **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley
Parking: Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way between Milvia & Shattuck.
BART station (closest): Downtown Berkeley BART

TICKETS: \$20-\$35 sliding scale, \$50 and \$100 reserved

INFO: For information, the public may visit themarsh.org.

-30-

PRESS: Contact Paige D'Encarnacao, Carla Befera & Co.
paige@cb-pr.com | 415-570-2623

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

