



May 14, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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May 14, 2018. **Theatrical Outfit**, Atlanta's second-oldest continuously-operating professional theatre, proudly announces its dynamic 2018-2019 **Season of Beauty**, which includes: ***The Book of Will***, America's most-produced living playwright and Georgia native **Lauren Gunderson's** love letter to theatre's timeless superstar, Will Shakespeare; ***The Royale***, **Marco Ramirez's** stylized, blazingly theatrical look at the high stakes, segregated world of boxing at the turn of the twentieth century based on the true story of fighter Jack Johnson; the return of our sparkling holiday smash hit ***Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*** by **Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon**; **Lee Hall's *The Pitmen Painters***, a humorous tale of character over class in the British mining community and high society art circles set between the World Wars; ***I Love to Eat***, Pulitzer Prize nominee **James Still's** salty culinary voyage around the world of love, life, and comfort food starring Atlanta stage vet William S. Murphey as celebrity chef James Beard; ***Five Guys Named Moe***, an exuberant musical overflowing with hit songs by R&B pioneer **Louis Jordan**; the return of our **Unexpected Play Festival**; and a jazz concert series from renowned trumpeter and vocalist **Joe Gransden** with special guest singers. Our **2018-2019 Season of Beauty**, featuring five plays, one musical, and special events, offers something for everyone.

Why "Beauty"? "To encounter beauty is to be confronted with a terrible and wonderful possibility of more. When the Ugly Duckling of the classic children's fable first saw the Swan, he was filled with "shame and longing." Our stories this season tell what happens when the beauty

of language and meaning, physical power, love, art, taste, or friendship dare our ordinary heroes toward their extraordinary destinies. Their transformations will thrill, provoke, charm, and move us. Join us. Let Beauty ready us all together to a deeper dimension of being.”

— **Tom Key, Artistic Director**

THEATRICAL OUTFIT'S 2018-2019 SEASON

THE BOOK OF WILL

by Lauren Gunderson (*Silent Sky* and *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*)

Directed by David Crowe (*Silent Sky*)

Featuring Artistic Director Tom Key

August 15-September 9, 2018

Winner of the 2018 Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Association New Play Award

1619-1623. London and Stratford-upon-Avon, England. Will Shakespeare is dead, and his legacy depends on a circle of devoted writers, actors, and friends. When a fishy *Hamlet* plays fast and loose nearby, the cohorts scramble to keep the Bard's true words from fading into obscurity. The solution? A definitive collection of his plays. But to print it, they must overcome a ruthless publisher, an inebriated poet, and their own ticking mortality. Atlanta native Lauren Gunderson unfurls her trademark humor and smarts in this love letter to theatre's timeless superstar.

THE ROYALE

by Marco Ramirez

Directed by Patdro Harris (*Fly* and *Simply Simone*)

October 10-November 4, 2018

1905-1910. America. Various cities. Jay “The Sport” Jackson dreams of being the first black heavyweight champion of the world, but in the segregated world of boxing, his chances are as good as knocked out. When a crooked promoter hatches a plan for the fight of the century, Jackson finds himself facing the reigning white defender. By unmasking the early 20th century boxing circuit, playwright Ramirez examines a long-held fascination with athletic heroes and the responsibilities thrust upon them outside of the ropes. Loosely based on real events, *The Royale* brings to explosive life the ultimate fight for a place in history.

MISS BENNET - CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY

by Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon

Directed by Carolyn Cook

November 21-December 23, 2018

1815. English countryside. This Christmas, revisit your favorite *Pride and Prejudice* characters at Mr. and Mrs. Darcy's grand estate, Pemberley, as The Outfit's smash holiday hit sparkles to life once more. Mary Bennet, bookish and overshadowed by her sisters, must trust her heart

and bloom when a curious visitor proves himself an intellectual match, kindred spirit, and possibly more. Bursting with modern wit and period style, this comedic sequel to one of the most beloved literary romances of all time will enchant Jane Austen fans, newcomers, and return guests alike.

THE PITMEN PAINTERS

By Lee Hall

Inspired by the book by William Feaver

Directed by Adam Koplan (*The Dancing Handkerchief* and *Perfect Arrangement*)

February 27-March 24, 2019

1934-1947. Great Britain. When a group of miners and a dentist hire a professor to teach Art Appreciation, they embark on one of the most unusual experiments in art history. As the pitmen become painters, suddenly avant-garde artists become their friends; their work hangs in prestigious collections; and they are celebrated in high society. But every day, they still risk their lives down in the mine. Based on a true story, this heartfelt lesson about character over class and talent over privilege challenges the way we look at art and reveals our universal desire for a richer, more colorful existence.

I LOVE TO EAT

by Pulitzer Prize finalist James Still

Directed by Associate Artistic Director Clifton Guterman

Starring William S. Murphey as celebrity chef James Beard

April 10-May 5, 2019

1984. Manhattan. "In the beginning there was Beard," said Julia Child of the first TV chef whose charisma transformed him from aspiring actor to culinary expert. A flamboyant yet introverted gastronomist, James Beard was his own greatest promoter and harshest critic. He weathered shifts in foodie culture for half a century, and the award bearing his name today is craved by chefs worldwide. Drop into Beard's Greenwich Village kitchen for bean-spilling anecdotes, on-air flashbacks, and a salty voyage around the world of love, life, and comfort food. Sit close and sample a taste!

FIVE GUYS NAMED MOE

Book by Clarke Peters

Music and Lyrics by Louis Jordan

Directed and Choreographed by Tom Jones

May 29-June 30, 2019

The Past and Present. The tunes of R&B pioneer Louis Jordan, whose slant on jazz paved the way for rock and roll in the '50s, drive this musical tribute. Nomax is broke; his girl is gone; and he's listening to the wireless in the wee hours of the morning. Five guys — Big Moe, Four-Eyed Moe, Eat Moe, No Moe and Little Moe — materialize and encourage Nomax to shake off the blues and live life to the fullest. Chart-topping tunes like, "Is You Is, or Is You Ain't My Baby,"

“Let the Good Times Roll,” and “Knock Me a Kiss,” put Nomax, and us, onto the road toward bliss. A recent smash hit in London’s West End.

THE UNEXPECTED PLAY FESTIVAL

featuring three exciting titles to be announced in the summer of 2018

January 14-15, 2019

Witness top-notch Atlanta talent bring characters and plots to vivid life in **three staged readings** of exciting works that will stir the soul ... and maybe even unsettle it. Think of it as **T.O. Stage 2** - unpredictable and exciting fare that stretches The Outfit aesthetic in either content, genre, or storytelling form. Preview tomorrow's hit titles, and then engage with the artists and staff at enlightening post-reading talkbacks. Buckle up!

JOE GRANDSEN JAZZ SERIES

Join Georgia-based performer Joe Gransden for four soulfully smooth gigs in our intimate Balzer Theater at Herren’s with band along with exciting special guests.

Renowned for the hard bop approach of his trumpet and a voice that has been compared to Chet Baker and Frank Sinatra, **Joe Gransden** has performed worldwide with the big bands of Tommy Dorsey and Glenn Miller, as well as Barry White, The Moody Blues, Kenny Rogers, The Temptations, Aretha Franklin, and The Whispers. Joe performs with his sixteen-piece Big Band locally at Café 290 and at various venues in Manhattan, Hilton Head, South Carolina, and California. Joe’s album “Close To My Heart” was produced by saxophone great Kenny G, and his newest project, “Songs of Sinatra & Friends,” celebrates the music of Ol’ Blue Eyes.

Shows:

August 26, 2018 at 7:30pm – “A Salute to the Great American Songbook”

Joe and his instrumental trio

December 16, 2018 at 7:30pm – “Winter Wonderland”

special guest Francine Reed (Lyle Lovett’s Large Band)

April 14, 2019 at 7:30pm – “Diamonds Are a Girl’s Best Friend”

special guest Deborah Bowman (*The Dancing Handkerchief*)

June 23, 2019 at 7:30pm – “Lady Day Sings the Blues”

special guest Terry Burrell (*Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill*)

TICKETS: Subscription packages – \$110-\$258 – are on sale now. Single tickets – \$26-\$51 – go on sale July 1, 2018. Tickets for the **Unexpected Play Festival** are \$10 per reading or \$25 for a full three-pack. Titles and dates will be announced in the summer of 2018. Tickets for the **Joe Gransden Jazz Series** are \$120 for the series or \$35 for individual shows and are on sale now online and by phone. 678.528.1500. www.theatricaloutfit.org/shows/2018-2019-season.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

SummerStage at the Outfit and Year-Round Acting Classes

With summer camps and classes designed for students ages 8 to 18, Theatrical Outfit Education offers a number of exciting opportunities for young actors. Whether it be our month-long, production-based **SummerStage** July session or Saturday **classes in Audition Technique**, TO Education programs emphasize storytelling, ensemble-building and a love for the creative process. All programs are led by theatre professionals/theatre educators, giving participants first-class training which emphasizes both skill-building and camaraderie. For information and program registration, visit www.TheatricalOutfit.org/Education.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Downtown Dialogues are community conversations featuring expert panelists discussing the social and global themes found in the show. They occur immediately following the first Saturday matinee of select productions and last no more than one hour. Dates and speakers may be found on each show page on The Outfit's website.

Macy's Page to Stage Talk Backs, one per production, occur the second-to-last Friday of each run after the curtain call, last approximately thirty minutes, and are an opportunity for patrons to engage directly with the production's artists.

Mother-Daughter Holiday Tea

Upgrade your ticket to *Miss Bennet*, wear your best bonnet, and honor the British tradition of High Tea complete with sandwiches and cakes. Meet costumed cast members before or after our girl-power sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*. Call the Box Office, or visit the *Miss Bennet* show page for reservations.

Wednesday, November 21, 2018 at 1:15pm (*pre-matinee*) - *Thanksgiving theme!* \$25

Saturday, December 22, 2018 at 1:15pm (*pre-matinee*) \$25

Saturday, December 22, 2018 at 5:00pm (*post-matinee; adult beverages served*) \$40

Community Christmas Caroling

Date and time to be announced.

Don your festive attire and gather to spread joy through the streets of downtown along with staff members, artists, patrons, and friends. Complete the evening back at the The Outfit for cider, cookies, and fellowship. Free and open to the public. Reservations encouraged.

FUNDRAISING: Theatrical Outfit's Annual Downtown Gala - February 9, 2019 at 6:30pm

ABOUT THEATRICAL OUTFIT: Atlanta's second-oldest continuously-operating professional theatre company was founded in 1976 and has been led by Artistic Director Tom Key since fall 1995. Key led the company through the creation of its award-winning downtown home, the Balzer Theater at Herren's, the first U.S. theater to achieve LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The Balzer Theater is also the historical site of Herren's, the first restaurant in Atlanta to voluntarily desegregate in 1962; its first African American patrons, Dr. Lee and Delores Shelton, remain Theatrical Outfit patrons. Key's programming of classics,

regional and world premieres, and musicals tell soul-stirring stories, with themes that explore diversity, equality, ethnicity, race, and religion; and often feature the best writers of the American South, including Ernest Gaines, Lauren Gunderson, Horton Foote, Harper Lee, Flannery O'Connor, Janece Shaffer, Sherry Shephard-Massat, Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder, and Tennessee Williams. After ten years of capital investment, T.O. is in new territory. Having retired its mortgage, the staff, trustees, and artists have launched a new 2018-2020 Strategic Plan designed to produce great art, diversify and grow our audience, increase revenue and reserves, develop artists who contribute to the dramatic canon, and maintain an effective organization.

ABOUT OUR VENUE: All 2018-2019 productions are performed at The Balzer Theater at Herren's at 84 Luckie Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30303. Theatrical Outfit utilizes a Loop Listening System, making The Balzer Theater at Herren's the first theater in the state of Georgia to incorporate this technology. Attendees with T-coil hearing aids may participate automatically, and others needing enhancement may obtain system-compatible headsets from our lobby Box Office.

678.528.1500 / www.TheatricalOutfit.org.

OUR VISION

A compassionate, joyful and just community.

OUR MISSION

Produce world-class theatre that starts the conversations that matter.

SEASON SPONSORS: City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, Fulton County, Macy's, Turner Broadcasting, Jackson Spalding, Kilpatrick Townsend