

MFA Acting Repertory

The Threepenny Opera

BOOK AND LYRICS BY
Bertolt Brecht

MUSIC BY
Kurt Weill

ENGLISH ADAPTATION BY
Marc Blitzstein

DIRECTED BY
Andy Robinson

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

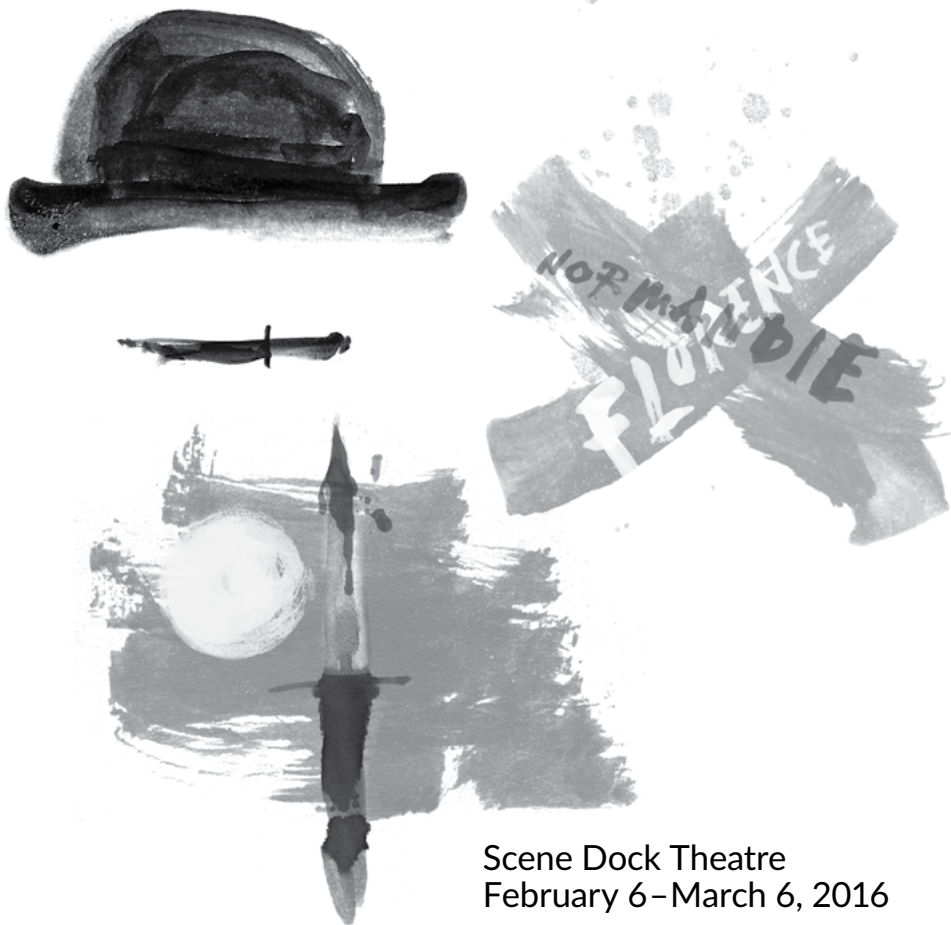
BY
Anna Deavere Smith

DIRECTED BY
Gregg T. Daniel

The Oresteia Project

WRITTEN BY
David Bridel and the
MFA Acting Class of 2016

INSPIRED BY
Aeschylus' *Oresteia*
DIRECTED BY
David Bridel



Scene Dock Theatre
February 6–March 6, 2016

Welcome to the 2016 MFA Acting Repertory.

YOUR PRESENCE at this performance is invaluable to us, and we trust you will enjoy watching our graduating MFA acting students in any and all of the plays that comprise this “rep” — Bertolt Brecht’s *The Threepenny Opera*, adapted by Marc Blitzstein, Anna Deavere Smith’s *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*, and *The Oresteia Project*, written by myself and the MFA Acting Class of 2016. This multi-play repertory is the equivalent of the students’ Master’s thesis, and it culminates the ensemble performance aspect of the USC School of Dramatic Arts’ MFA actor-training program. For more on the extraordinary challenges and rewards of the repertory experience, please read the following words, penned by the MFA Acting’s Founding Director Andy Robinson, which perfectly capture the essence of this remarkable experience.

—David Bridel, Interim Dean & Director of MFA Acting



THE MFA ACTING CLASS OF 2016

BACK ROW (L TO R): Chantal Nchako, Jinwoo Jung, Abe Martell, Laura Wineland, Christian Henley, Christopher Hawthorn, Chris Ramirez, Kyla Ledes
 FRONT ROW (L TO R): Adam Lebowitz-Lockard, Chae Chaput, Leve Ross, Ashley Eskew, Salome Mergia, Gabi Rosamond

The MFA Acting Repertory Experience by Andy Robinson

THIS REP SERVES two purposes in actor-training: one, it brings a group of student-actors together into a working ensemble; and two, it gives them an intense repertory experience that allows them to practically apply all aspects of their training. What the actor learns from being a working member of an ensemble is every bit as important as learning the nuts and bolts of the craft. To be a true ensemble player, one develops a vital connection and a responsibility to the other players. Individual talents are brought together into a coherent and responsive ensemble that creates the potential for extraordinary theatre.

Michael Chekhov, the great Russian actor, director and teacher, believed “the purpose of all training is to create character.” After more than two years of classes, workshops and performance situations, each one of these actors has now created three or more characters from three very different plays. And because they are a small group taking on this enormous challenge, they are sometimes playing roles that commercial theatres would be reluctant to hire them to play. Madeline Puzo, who was the dean when the MFA Acting rep was established, remarked that “repertory theatre is the triumph of miscasting.” Nothing stretches an actor more than to struggle with a character that’s 180 degrees removed from her or his “type.” It’s this kind of “miscasting” that often allows for revelatory performance.

Until relatively recently, actors coming out of drama school had more opportunity to secure an apprenticeship with one of a number of resident repertory companies located throughout the country. The intensity of the rep experience (rehearsing one play during the day, playing another at night) allowed the apprentice to put recent drama school training to the test of practical application. Unfortunately, these resident rep companies have dwindled down to a precious few.

Today, the vast majority of students coming out of drama school are immediately thrown into a “freelance” situation where the work comes sporadically with a lot of “down time” in-between. The formative practical experience that professional rep companies used to provide has now, to a large extent, fallen to academy-styled university or private actor-training programs. And if the repertory experience is not even offered in these programs, then chances are slim that the graduated actor will ever find it in the professional world.

Multi-play rep is not for the faint of heart. It requires stamina, patience and true belief in the creative imagination. Every bit of intellectual, emotional and physical resource the actor possesses is put into play. It’s an experience that strengthens and expands presence, the actor’s most valuable asset, and I am deeply grateful to Interim Dean David Bridel and the School of Dramatic Arts for keeping the experience alive here at USC.

REPERTORY PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

The Threepenny Opera
 Sat Feb 6 at 2:30 p.m.
 Sun Feb 7 at 8 p.m.
 Wed Feb 17 at 7 p.m.
 Thur Feb 18 at 7 p.m.
 Sat Feb 27 at 8 p.m.
 Sun Feb 28 at 2:30 p.m.
 Fri Mar 4 at 7 p.m.
 Sat Mar 5 at 2:30 p.m.

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992
 Sat Feb 6 at 8 p.m.
 Sun Feb 7 at 2:30 p.m.
 Fri Feb 19 at 7 p.m.
 Sat Feb 20 at 2:30 p.m.
 Wed Feb 24 at 7 p.m.
 Thur Feb 25 at 7 p.m.
 Sat Mar 5 at 8 p.m.
 Sun Mar 6 at 2:30 p.m.

The Oresteia Project
 Sat Feb 13 at 8 p.m.
 Sun Feb 14 at 2:30 p.m.
 Sat Feb 20 at 8 p.m.
 Sun Feb 21 at 2:30 p.m.
 Fri Feb 26 at 7 p.m.
 Sat Feb 27 at 2:30 p.m.
 Wed Mar 2 at 7 p.m.
 Thur Mar 3 at 7 p.m.

USC School of Dramatic Arts

PRESENTS

MFA Acting Repertory

THE COMPANY

Chae Chaput Ashley Eskew Christopher Hawthorn Christian Henley
Jinwoo Jung Adam Lebowitz-Lockard Kyla Ledes Abe Martell
Salome Mergia Chantal Nchako Chris Ramirez
Gabi Rosamond Leve Ross Laura Wineland

The Threepenny Opera

BOOK AND LYRICS BY

Bertolt Brecht

MUSIC BY

Kurt Weill

ENGLISH ADAPTATION BY

Marc Blitzstein

SCENIC DESIGN

Takeshi Kata

COSTUME DESIGN

Howard Schmitt

LIGHTING DESIGN

Leigh Allen

SOUND DESIGN

Danielle Kisner

PROJECTION & VIDEO DESIGN

G. Austin Allen

STAGE MANAGER

Maddie Felgentreff

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Molly McGraw

DIRECTED BY

Andy Robinson

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

BY

Anna Deavere Smith

SCENIC DESIGN

Takeshi Kata

COSTUME DESIGN

Holly Victoria

LIGHTING DESIGN

Leigh Allen

SOUND DESIGN

Danielle Kisner

PROJECTION & VIDEO DESIGN

G. Austin Allen

STAGE MANAGER

Maddie Felgentreff

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Molly McGraw

DIRECTED BY

Gregg T. Daniel

The Oresteia Project

WRITTEN BY

David Bridel and the
MFA Acting Class of
2016

INSPIRED BY

Aeschylus' *Oresteia*

SCENIC DESIGN

Takeshi Kata

COSTUME DESIGN

Megan Guthrie-
Wedemeyer

LIGHTING DESIGN

Leigh Allen

SOUND DESIGN

Danielle Kisner

PROJECTION & VIDEO DESIGN

G. Austin Allen

STAGE MANAGER

Maddie Felgentreff

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Molly McGraw

DIRECTED BY

David Bridel

The Threepenny Opera

CAST OF CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

Street Singer

Kyla Ledes

Macheath

Abe Martell

Jenny Diver

Chae Chaput

Mr. Peachum

Jinwoo Jung

Mrs. Peachum

Ashley Eskew

Reverend Kimball,

Coaxer, Beggar

Chantal Nchako

Readymony Matt,

Beggar, Constable

Adam Lebowitz-

Lockard

Bob the Saw, Betty, Beggar

Salome Mergia

Crookfinger Jake, Beggar

Chris Ramirez

Filch, Constable

Christian Henley

Polly Peachum

Gabi Rosamond

Walt Dreary,

Sergeant Smith

Leve Ross

Tiger Brown,

Victoria's Messenger

Christopher Hawthorn

Lucy Brown, Dolly

Laura Wineland

PLACE & TIME: An imagined London somewhere between the late eighteenth century and now.

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Andy Robinson is a Professor of Theatre Practice and has directed in all the MFA three-play reps from the first in 2009, *A Midsummer's Night's Dream*, to last year's *A Servant of Two Masters*. A graduate of The New School for Social Research and the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art, Andy has worked in theatre, film and TV as an award-winning actor, director and writer for over 50 years, and in 2004 was asked to create the current USC MFA actor-training program. His theatre memoir, *Stepping Into the Light: Sources of An Actor's Craft*, was published last fall by Figueroa Press.

SPECIAL THANKS

Natsuko Ohama, Irene Robinson

"On Thinking About Hell"

—Brecht

On thinking about Hell, I
gather
My brother Shelley found it
was a place
Much like the city of London. I
Who live in Los Angeles and
not in London
Find, on thinking about Hell,
that it must be
Still more like Los Angeles.

In Hell too
There are, I've no doubt, these
luxuriant gardens
With flowers as big as trees,
which of course wither
Unhesitatingly if not
nourished with very
expensive water. And fruit
markets with great heaps
of fruit, albeit having
Neither smell nor taste. And
endless procession of cars
Lighter than their own
shadows, faster than
Mad thoughts, gleaming
vehicles in which
Jolly-looking people come
from nowhere and are
nowhere bound.
And houses, built for happy
people, therefore standing
empty
Even when lived in.

The houses in Hell, too, are
not all ugly.
But the fear of being thrown
on the street
Wears down the inhabitants
of the villas no less than
The inhabitants of the shanty
towns.

Scene Dock Theatre | February 6–March 6, 2016

The Threepenny Opera is presented through special arrangement with R & H Theatricals: www.rnh.com

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992 is produced by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

CAST OF CHARACTERS (in alphabetical order)

Judith Tur Chae Chaput	Ted Briseno, Joe Viola, Federico Sandoval Abe Martell
Elaine Young, Mrs. June Park Ashley Eskew	Angela King, Gina Rae AKA Queen Malkah, Elvira Evers, Maria Salome Mergia
Sergeant Charles Duke, Shelby Coffey III, Daryl Gates, Reginald Denny Christopher Hawthorn	Jessye Norman, Katie Miller, Maxine Waters, Elaine Brown Chantal Nchako
Keith Watson, Paul Parker Christian Henley	Rudy Salas, Sr., Octavio Sandoval, Chris Oh Chris Ramirez
Jay Woong Yahng, Walter Park, Jin Ho Lee Jinwoo Jung	Josie Morales, Mrs. Young-Soon Han Gabi Rosamond
Stanley K. Sheinbaum, Bill Bradley, Anonymous Man Adam Lebowitz-Lockard	Charles Lloyd, Cornel West, Twilight Bey Leve Ross
Alice Waters Kyla Ledes	Talent Agent Laura Wineland

TIME: 1992. | PLACE: Los Angeles. | There will be one 15-minute intermission.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Gregg T. Daniel's productions include a revival of Alice Childress' *The Wedding Band* for The Antaeus Co., which won the 2014 Stage Raw Awards for Best Revival and Best Ensemble. He directed the New Jersey premiere of Katori Hall's *The Mountaintop* for Cape May Stage. Gregg received a Best Director nomination from the NAACP Theatre Awards for the West Coast premiere of Kwame-Kwei-Armah's *Elmina's Kitchen*. The production won in the Best Ensemble category. Gregg is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. He is the Artistic Director and founding member of Lower Depth Theatre Ensemble. LDTE recently co produced with the Skylight Theatre, the West Coast premieres of Eisa Davis' *Bulrusher* and Nathan Alan Davis' *Dontrell, Who Kissed The Sea*. For more info on the company and to join their mailing list, visit them at www.lowerdepththeatreensemble.org

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

The cataclysmic events of 1992 depicted in Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight: Los Angeles* hold an eerie resonance for American society in 2016. Issues of racial injustice, economic disparity and deadly violence directed towards persons of color grip our attention with renewed interest and outrage.

Ms. Smith's play was never meant to offer solutions, however, it does offer us a mirror in which to view the insidious effects of institutionalized racism. For if we, as a society, are to effect change, we must be resolute in insisting upon justice for all.

—G. Daniel

SPECIAL THANKS

Stephanie Shroyer, Jack Rowe, David Bridel, Maria Pasquarelli, Eliana Fuller, Natsuko Ohama, Kennedy Daniel, Verilyn Jones

The Oresteia Project

CAST OF CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

Tribunal, Tyndareus Jinwoo Jung	Clytemnestra Chae Chaput
Tribunal, Athena Salome Mergia	Iphigenia, Cassandra Gabi Rosamond
Tribunal, Helen Chantal Nchako	Chrysothemis Laura Wineland
Orestes Chris Ramirez	Hermione Ashley Eskew
Apollo Abe Martell	Aegisthus Christopher Hawthorn
Electra Kyla Ledes	Menelaus Adam Lebowitz-Lockard
Agamemnon Leve Ross	Pylades Christian Henley

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

David Bridel is the Interim Dean and the Director of the MFA in Acting at the School of Dramatic Arts. He is a director, writer, performer, choreographer and teacher whose work has been seen in theatres and opera houses around the world.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Over the course of several years, I have developed a process by which the third year ensemble of MFA actors and I create an original theatre piece together, using improvisation, movement and script-writing techniques. This play, *The Oresteia Project*, continues the tradition and builds on my fascination with Greek theatre.

The original *Oresteia* trilogy by Aeschylus is widely regarded as the first of the Greek tragedies. Uniquely, it concludes — after so many agonies — in forgiveness and with the establishment of the rule of law in place of a cycle of vendetta and revenge. While our production takes certain liberties with plot, character and the unities of time and place, we have aimed to remain true to the spirit of the original, celebrating the vast range of human potential — from irrational violence to clemency and civic conscience — that animates this most vital expression of our collective mythology.

PRODUCTION STAFF

For *The Threepenny Opera*

Music Direction Matthew Oden

Vocal Coach Natsuko Ohama

Choreography Lili Fuller

Dance Captain Laura Wineland

Scenic Artist Stephanie Nimick

Assistant Stage Manager Kelly Merritt

Associate Scenic Design Haley Miller

Assistant Projection & Video Design Simon Chau

Assistant Projection & Video Design PA Liam Sterbinsky

Crew Christina Chow, Isadora Cintron, Haley Finerman, Shaun Heard,

Wongjung Kim, Chengcheng Li, Lizzie Pollard, Adrian Ramos

For *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*

Vocal Coach Natsuko Ohama

Choreography Lili Fuller, Gabi Rosamond

Assistant Director Maria Pasquarelli

Dance Captain Gabi Rosamond

Scenic Artist Stephanie Nimick

Assistant Stage Manager Kelly Merritt

Associate Scenic Design Haley Miller

Assistant Projection & Video Design Simon Chau

Assistant Projection & Video Design PA Liam Sterbinsky

Crew Alfredo Arevalo, Gabriela Bonet, Samantha Cavalcanti,

Goran Ivanovski, Aimee Savran, Caleb Thermidor, Eric Yamil

For *The Oresteia Project*

Vocal Coach Natsuko Ohama

Fight Choreography Edgar Landa

Fight Captain Kyla Ledes

Scenic Artist Stephanie Nimick

Assistant Stage Manager Kelly Merritt

Associate Scenic Design Haley Miller

Assistant Projection & Video Design Simon Chau

Assistant Projection & Video Design PA Liam Sterbinsky

Crew Lisa Ermel, Julie Gongwer, Eliza Gutierrez-Dewar,

Michael Khachanov, Ali-Khan Lochin, Yelena Podkoizina,

Katelin Walsch, Richard Young

INTERIM DEAN

Associate Professor of Theatre Practice David Bridel (Director of MFA in Acting)

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Professor Velina Hasu Houston (Director of Dramatic Writing)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

Meiling Cheng (Director of Critical Studies)

Oliver Mayer

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Carla Della Gatta

Takeshi Kata

Tom Ontiveros

Sibyl Wickersheimer

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Andrei Belgrader

Natsuko Ohama

Andrew J. Robinson

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Paul Backer (Director of Undergraduate Voice and Movement)

Brent Blair (Director of MA in Applied Theatre Arts)

Elsbeth M. Collins (Director of Production)

Anita Dashiell-Sparks

Christina Haatainen-Jones (Director of Design)

Joseph Hacker

Duncan Mahoney (Technical Director)

Mary-Joan Negro (Director of BA Acting)

Jack Rowe (Artistic Director, Director of BFA Acting)

Stephanie Shroyer (Associate Artistic Director)

Eric Trules

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS OF THEATRE PRACTICE

Paula Cizmar

John DeMita

Kathleen Dunn-Muzingo

Laura Flanagan

Melinda C. Finberg

Randle Mell

Louise Peacock

David Warshofsky

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Courtesy Joint Appointments: Thomas G. Cummings, Larry E. Greiner (Emeritus), Bruce Smith
Emeriti Faculty: Don Llewellyn, Eve Roberts, Robert R. Scales, James Wilson

The Learned Ladies

By Molière

Translated by Richard Wilbur

Bing Theatre Feb 25–28, 2016

USC School of Dramatic Arts

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Scenic Charge Artist Stephanie Nimick
Properties Manager Hannah Burnham

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Located in Los Angeles, a city synonymous with artistic innovation and excellence, the top-ranked USC School of Dramatic Arts is a leader in dramatic arts education. The School uniquely blends artistic training in a conservatory environment with world-class faculty artists and the full academic experience found only within a major research university. This close-knit, supportive environment offers students the freedom to explore their artistic passions. Through programs of the highest caliber, as well as initiatives that provide access to professional experience, students are prepared for leadership in every facet of dramatic arts. For more information, please visit dramaticarts.usc.edu.

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Suzanne Grossmann Scales
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Passion. Rigor. Excellence.



USC School of Dramatic Arts 2015/2016 SEASON

Rumors

By Neil Simon
Directed by Edward Edwards
SDT Oct 1-4, 2015

Love and Information

By Caryl Churchill
Directed by Paul Backer
MT Oct 1-4, 2015

Mansfield Park

By Willis Hall
Adapted from the novel by Jane Austen
Directed by Jeremy Skidmore
BT Oct 8-11, 2015

The Quick-Change Room

By Nagle Jackson
Directed by Robert Bailey
SDT Oct 22-25, 2015

Ring Round the Moon

By Jean Anouilh
Adapted by Christopher Fry
Directed by Stephanie Shroyer
MT Oct 29-Nov 1, 2015

You Can't Take It With You

By George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart
Directed by Gigi Bermingham
BT Nov 5-8, 2015

Marisol

By José Rivera
Directed by Denise Blazor
MT Nov 19-22, 2015

La Ronde

By Arthur Schnitzler
Translated by Carl Mueller
Directed by Cameron Watson
SDT Nov 19-22, 2015

MFA Acting Repertory

SDT Feb 6-Mar 6, 2016

Threepenny Opera

Book and Lyrics by Bertolt Brecht
Music by Kurt Weill
English adaptation by Marc Blitzstein
Directed by Andrew J. Robinson

Twilight:

Los Angeles, 1992
By Anna Deavere Smith
Directed by Gregg T. Daniel

The Oresteia Project

Written by David Bridel and the MFA Acting Class of 2016
Inspired by Aeschylus' *Oresteia*
Directed by David Bridel

The Learned Ladies

By Molière
Translated by Richard Wilbur
BT Feb 25-28, 2016

Camille

By Alexandre Dumas
Translated by Pam Gems
Directed by Debbie McMahon
MT Mar 3-6, 2016

The Country Wife

By William Wycherley
Directed by John DeMita
SDT Mar 31-Apr 3, 2016

A Little Night Music

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by Hugh Wheeler
Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick
Suggested by a Film by Ingmar Bergman
Originally Produced & Directed on Broadway by Harold Prince
Directed by Kelly Ward
BT Mar 31-Apr 10, 2016

BFA Sophomore Shows

The Rimers of Eldritch

By Lanford Wilson
Directed by Jack Rowe
MT Apr 7-10, 2016

Book of Days

By Lanford Wilson
Directed by Paul Backer
MT Apr 21-24, 2016

Breath, Boom

By Kia Cortron
Directed by Anita Dashiell-Sparks
SDT Apr 21-24, 2016

New Works Festivals

YEAR 1 New Play Readings
Parkside 1016 May 2, 2016

YEAR 2 Playwrights Workshop
MT Apr 8-24, 2016

YEAR 3 Play Project
MT May 1, 2016

ALUMNI

Greenhouse at The Playhouse
Carrie Hamilton Theatre
at The Pasadena Playhouse

KEY: SDT = Scene Dock Theatre BT = Bing Theatre MT = McClintock Theatre

TICKET PRICES

General \$10, Seniors or Faculty/Staff \$8, Students \$5

MUSICALS: General \$15, Seniors or Faculty/Staff \$10, Students \$6

PERFORMANCES

Thurs & Fri at 7 p.m., Sat at 2:30 & 8 p.m.
and Sun at 2:30 p.m. (Unless noted otherwise)

For more information about our shows, visit

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