



AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE

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For further information: Sara Young, Director of Communications
608-588-7402 x 138
syoung@americanplayers.org
www.americanplayers.org

AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2010 CASTING

SPRING GREEN, WIS: American Players Theatre's (APT) 31st Season will bring a series of five plays in the outdoor theater up the hill, and an additional three productions in the intimate 200-seat Touchstone Theatre. In addition to the plays, APT will offer enlightening special events, mouthwatering meals and new promotions for pre-season ticket buyers.

The season Up the Hill runs from Saturday, June 5 through Sunday, October 3. This year's plays include William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, helmed by first-time APT director Tim Ocel and *All's Well That Ends Well*, directed by John Langs; Lillian Hellman's *Another Part of the Forest* directed by William Brown; W. Somerset Maugham's *The Circle* directed by James Bohnen and George Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara* directed by APT's Producing Artistic Director David Frank.

In addition to the five plays up the hill, the Touchstone Theatre will host three plays in rotating repertory. *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, directed by Kenneth Albers; *The Syringa Tree* by Pamela Gien, directed by C. Michael Wright; and Athol Fugard's *Exits and Entrances* directed by Kate Buckley. With only 200 seats, opening nights and special performances at the Touchstone are expected to sell out quickly, so patrons are encouraged to make their plans early.

According to Producing Artistic Director, David Frank "With another groundbreaking season upon us, we - and I personally - get to realize the longtime dream of staging *Major Barbara*, one of Shaw's most thought-provoking works. In addition to that, we have our first venture into Hellman and Maugham and three incredible plays to continue the astonishing success of the Touchstone Theatre into its second season."

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Tickets are currently on sale at a discount of 20% off every ticket and 30% off fall tickets (August 27 – October 17, 2010) when purchased along with summer shows.

2010 ticket prices range from \$34 to \$64, and groups of 20 or more may qualify for special rates. Premier seats are suited to patrons who wish to sit closest to the stage, and are available on an extremely limited basis. Gourmet meals and tickets to additional events can be purchased along with tickets by calling the box office at 608-588-2361, or visiting APT's website at www.americanplayers.org.

The 2010 Season

Up the Hill

Five plays presented in rotating repertory:

As You Like It

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Tim Ocel

June 5 through October 3, 2010

Press Opening: June 12, 2010

Shakespeare frequently sent his characters into the woods in search of identity, truth, and love. In this, one of his greatest comedies, those woods are just one part of a world where rules and labels apply only sporadically and loosely. *As You Like It* tells the tale of characters living in disguise and in exile in the Forest of Arden. Hilarity ensues, as identities and labels are mistaken and twisted. Being a girl doesn't exclude being a boy. Being an existentialist doesn't exclude looking for something to believe in. But being human? Well, yes, that counts for everything. *As You Like It* is the rare crowd-pleaser that refuses to short-change the Big Questions: Who am I? Where am I headed? And what in the world am I doing in this forest?

Featuring Paul Bentzen as Adam, Hillary Clemens as Rosalind, David Daniel as Touchstone, Brian Mani as Dukes Senior and Frederick, James Ridge as Jaques, Matt Schwader as Orlando and Tiffany Scott as Celia.

All's Well That Ends Well

By William Shakespeare

Directed by John Langs

June 11 through October 1, 2010

Press Opening: June 19, 2010

Some relationships are tricky, and The Bard sets out to remind us of that inconvenient truth via one of theater's most unconventional heroines, Helena. Fiercely determined to get what she wants (in this case, the almost equally enigmatic Bertram), Helena has quite the bag of tricks, entrapment not least among them. Since *All's Well That Ends Well* defies easy categorization, it is sometimes called a "problem play." Needless to say, we take issue. True enough, the play deals in the complex currency of life and love. If that's problematic, so too then is it funny, beautiful, even outrageous. Or, as Shakespeare himself puts it, "The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together."

Featuring Tracy Michelle Arnold as Countess of Rossillion, Sarah Day as the Widow, Jim DeVita as Parolles, Matt Schwader as Bertram and Jonathan Smoots as the King.

Another Part of the Forest

By Lillian Hellman

Directed by William Brown

June 18 through September 18, 2010

Press Opening June 26, 2010

So swiftly our theater Up the Hill becomes another place, another era. This time it's the American South in the wake of the Civil War, where charm belies ill will and where the predatory Hubbards (here in a prequel to *The Little Foxes*) have made a fortune converting national catastrophe into personal wealth. But that story, as it turns out, is only a backdrop to the family battle that plays out among a supremely manipulative father; a beautiful, conniving daughter; two ambitious brothers; and a mother who wants nothing more than to get far away from them all. In its own playful, thrilling, and darkly comic way, *Another Part of the Forest* gives generously to its audience; after all, characters equally worthy of love and horror, going after each other with gladiatorial rage, surgical precision — and, somehow, charm — can't help but keep us on the edge of our seats.

Featuring Paul Bentzen as Colonel Isham, David Daniel as John Bagtry, Marcus Truschinski as Ben Hubbard, Jonathan Smoots as Marcus Hubbard, Tracy Michelle Arnold as Laurette, Susan Shunk as Birdie Bagtry, Sarah Day as Lavinia Hubbard and Tiffany Scott as Regina Hubbard.

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The Circle

By W. Somerset Maugham

Directed by James Bohnen

July 30 through September 25, 2010

Press Opening August 7, 2010

Most people know Somerset Maugham for his celebrated novels and stories, but we tend to forget that he was also one of the most popular and important dramatists of his time. Revisiting *The Circle*, we knew at once that it was perfect for APT: witty, elegant and deftly plotted, its sparkling exterior hiding a tender and occasionally dangerous interior. The play boasts two love triangles, one of the older set, another of the younger. Lady Kitty left her family 30 years ago for a new husband and a new life. But now she's back, second husband in tow, to revisit what she left behind and to find her now-grown son dealing in a triangle of his own. The hall of mirrors that ensues is both funny and alarming, consistently entertaining, and, ultimately, devastatingly wise.

Featuring Tracy Michelle Arnold as Lady Kitty, Paul Bentzen as the Butler, Paul Hurley as Arnold, Brian Mani as Lord Clive, James Ridge as Lord Porteous, Susan Shunk as Elizabeth and Marcus Truschinski as Edward.

Major Barbara

By George Bernard Shaw

Directed by David Frank

August 6 through October 2, 2010

Press Opening August 14, 2010

What could be more mesmerizing than this, one of Shaw's most loved plays? How about seeing it performed here, at APT, by an all-star cast. Barbara, a major in the Salvation Army, and her father, whose only religion is wealth, give us two of theater's most memorable and entertaining characters, and playgoers share their challenges as unexpected and dangerous (not to mention funny) truths are uncovered. All of Shaw's trademarks are present in spades as this play turns familiar truth after familiar truth on its head: political philosophy couched in humorous dialogue; crackling, edge-of-your-seat scenes; general effervescence and eloquence.

Sarah Day as Lady Britomart, Jim DeVita as Adolphus, Michael Huftile as Bilton, Darragh Kennan as Charles, Colleen Madden as Barbara, Matt Schwader as Bill, Tiffany Scott as Rummy and Jonathan Smoots as Andrew.

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In the Touchstone Theatre

Three plays in rotating repertory:

Waiting for Godot

By Samuel Beckett

Directed by Kenneth Albers

June 22 through October 17, 2010

Press Opening June 25, 2010

Does it qualify as irony that a play whose central concern is communication has inspired so much consternation over the years? No matter. Considered by many to be one of, if not the, most influential play of the 20th century, *Waiting for Godot* asks the big questions in ways few other works of art could: how do we get up every morning, fight through every day, and go to sleep every evening never knowing whether our hopes and dreams might be granted? *Godot* asks — with theatricality, tension, humor, and grace — that we rethink the world and our place within it.

Featuring Jim DeVita as Estragon, Brian Mani as Pozzo and James Ridge as Vladimir.

The Syringa Tree

By Pamela Gien

Directed by C. Michael Wright

June 23 through October 16, 2010

Press Opening June 29, 2010

With very good reason, many of you will see *The Syringa Tree* simply to witness Colleen Madden playing all 24 of the play's characters. And, needless to say, you will not be let down: after all, this very combination of script, actor, and director has created near-legendary results in the past, at Milwaukee's Renaissance Theatre. *The Syringa Tree* takes place against the backdrop of apartheid-era South Africa. It deals in the shame that so often comes with knowledge, the corruption that can belie beauty, and the innocence rarely maintained as we grow up. That innocence is particularly hard to hold on to for the privileged white girl at the core of this story. Uncomfortable questions (why do we love a land capable of atrocities simply because it is "home"?) give way to uncomfortable answers —and devastating conclusions.

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Exits and Entrances

By Athol Fugard

Directed by Kate Buckley

August 5 through September 26, 2010

Press Opening August 10, 2010

Though Fugard is known for his works opposing apartheid, here the great playwright tells a more personal story about the connections between playwright and actor, student and teacher, upstart and mentor. In *Exits and Entrances*, a young playwright and an aging actor whom he admires strike up a friendship that becomes a springboard for questions about life, art, and why we all do what we do, day in and day out, right up to old age. Needless to say, such an intimate work, with such close ties to the theater, is a more than perfect fit for the Touchstone.

Featuring Kenneth Albers as Andre and David Daniel as the Playwright.

The 2010 Company

This summer, APT welcomes a staff of more than 100 professional actors, technicians, designers and craftspeople. This eight-play season requires an acting company of 28, including ten Core Company members who have longstanding relationships with APT and have become audience favorites.

The core acting company includes longstanding APT talents Tracy Michelle Arnold, (Judith Bliss in the 2009 production of *Hay Fever*), Paul Bentzen (Colonel Craven *The Philanderer*, 2009), David Daniel (Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*, 2009), Sarah Day (Mary Tyrone in *Long Day's Journey*, 2009), Jim DeVita (Leonard Charteris in *The Philanderer*, 2009), Colleen Madden (Hermione in *The Winter's*), Brian Mani (David Bliss in *Hay Fever*, 2009), James Ridge (Dr. Paramore in *The Philanderer*, 2009), Jonathan Smoots (Deeley in *Old Times* and Pistol in *Henry V*) and Matt Schwader (Henry in *Henry V*, 2009).

Other actors returning to the APT stage this season include: Kenneth Albers, Michael Huftile, Paul Hurley, Darragh Kennan, Tiffany Scott, Susan Shunk, Marcus Truschinski, Nicholas Harazin and Travis A. Knight.

Food & Events

Fat Jacks Barbecue

An APT tradition. This feast features tasty ribs and chicken in Fat Jacks famous spicy or mild sauce. With a buffet of accompaniments featuring potato salad, pasta salad, coleslaw, baked beans, rolls and dessert. \$14.50 per person.

Sundays June 27, July 25, August 29, September 12. Serving from 4 - 5:30 pm.

Taste of the Grape

Sample fine wines from around the world. Includes a light repast of quality cheeses all brought to you by the gourmands from Steve's in Madison. \$30.00 per person.

Friday, July 16. Serving from 6 - 7:30 pm.

Chili Finale

Our friends from the Spring Green General Store help us bid farewell to the Up-the-Hill season with their annual chili dinner. Featuring gourmet vegetarian chili and all the delicious sides you'd expect. \$9.75 per person.

Sunday, October 3. Serving from 4 - 5:30 pm.

The Bard Talk Series

Add dimension to your APT experience by joining us for one or more installments of the Bard Talks series - conversations on APT, our season and Shakespeare to get you in the mood for your play. Check back later, or call our friendly Box Office staff for the full schedule and list of topics. The cost is \$5.00, (free with your APT Insiders card). Reservations are recommended; call the APT Box Office at 608-588-2361 to save your spot.

Sundays July 18-September 12 at 4 pm

Saturdays August 21, 28, September 4, 11 at 1:00 pm

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Inside Out Tours

In this 90-minute walking tour, you'll see all that goes into making the productions you ultimately see Up the Hill and in the Touchstone Theatre.

You'll visit the costume shop where a staff of 30 people construct and prepare nearly 200 costumes for the APT season. You'll stop by the wig shop, the millinery shop and the craft room where the armour is made. In the scene shop, prop shop and paint shop, you'll learn what goes into building scenery and props that need to withstand the rigors of an outdoor theater.

Up the Hill, you'll get a peek backstage and in the dressing rooms. Finally, your tour ends with a quick side trip to the new Touchstone Theatre.

Saturdays July 17, August 21 and 28, September 4 and 11 at 11 a.m.

Tickets are \$12.50 per person, available through the Box office or order online.

Ride the Bus

We've once again teamed up with the good folks at Badger Coaches to offer bus service from Madison to APT for select performances. Buy your bus tickets in advance now with your show tickets. The bus departs from UW Credit Union on University Avenue at 5:45. Arrive at APT in time for a quick picnic before the show. \$12.00 per bus ticket.

Available on the following Fridays:

July 9 - *All's Well that Ends Well*

July 16 - *As You Like It*

July 23 - *Another Part of the Forest*

July 30 - *The Circle*

August 6 - *Major Barbara*

The bus is only available for shows in the Up-the-Hill Theatre.

You must attend the play that accompanies your chosen date in order to ensure that you are on time for the return bus. Advance purchase required, seats are limited.

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Skippeth-out-of -Work-Early

This free and frolicsome gathering takes place every Thursday night at 6 p.m. in the picnic area. Musicians and entertainers stroll through the picnic grounds to add fun to your picnic before the show. Check back in the Spring to see who's on the schedule for any given Thursday.

APT offers tours and hands-on activities for adults and families. For more information, please visit the website at www.playinthewoods.org for details.

2010 Ticket Prices

	Very Fine	Prime	Premier
Tues., Wed., Thurs. evening	\$39.00	\$46.00	\$52.00
Saturday matinee & Sunday shows	\$42.00	\$49.00	\$55.00
Friday evening	\$45.00	\$52.00	\$57.00
Saturday evening	\$51.00	\$58.00	\$64.00
Fall morning shows	\$39.00	\$46.00	\$52.00

For tickets, call the box office at (608) 588-2361 or order online at www.playinthewoods.org.

Electronic images available; call 608-588-7402 x 140 or email Jessica Amend at jamend@americanplayers.org.

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