

A man with dark, curly hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a dark shirt, is captured in a dynamic pose on a stage. He is holding a bright red electric guitar with a colorful, geometric pattern on the body. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a large, enthusiastic crowd of people, many with their hands raised in the air, suggesting a concert or a large-scale performance. The lighting is dramatic, with a strong red glow on the man and the guitar, and a blue glow on the crowd and the stage floor.

trinityrep

The Song of Summer

by Lauren Yee

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2018–19 Season at the Lederer Theater Center
under the direction of

Curt Columbus
The Arthur P. Solomon and
Sally E. Lapides Artistic Director

Tom Parrish
Executive Director

The Song of Summer by Lauren Yee

THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Directed by **Taibi Magar**

Set Design by **Adam Rigg**

Costume Design by **Valérie Thérèse Bart**

Lighting Design by **Jeanette Oi-Suk Yew**

Sound Design by **Mikaal Sulaiman**

Dramaturgy by **Kristin Leahey**

Original Song Composed by **Max Vernon & Helen Park**

Production Stage Managed by **Sara Sheets***

THE CAST (in alphabetical order)

Tina **Tina Chilip***

Mrs. C **Anne Scurria****

Robbie **Charlie Thurston****

Joe **Joe Wilson, Jr.****

The Song of Summer will be performed **with no intermission.**

Production Director **Laura E. Smith**

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors & stage managers

** Trinity Rep Resident Acting Company member

WORLD PREMIERE

March 14 – April 14, 2019

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PLEASE TURN OFF cell phones, beepers, pagers, and alarms during the performance. Texting and cell phone use are limited to intermission, outside the theater. Photography, video, and/or audio recording of this performance by any means are strictly prohibited.

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FROM THE ARTHUR P. SOLOMON
AND SALLY E. LAPIDES ARTISTIC
DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS

FROM THE
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR



WELCOME TO TRINITY

Repertory Company and to our presentation of Lauren Yee's wonderful new play, *The Song of Summer*. Through the generous support of The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, we have been able to develop plays right here at Trinity Rep over the last several years, built around our company of actors and written by some of the finest young playwrights in America. Yee's play is a beautiful

example of this great, ongoing work.

Remember that song that you couldn't get out of your head last summer? That ridiculous earworm that made its way onto every wedding playlist, the one that you can't really sing the words to, but as soon as I hum the tune, you'll hum along? Probably by some one-hit wonder, it is played everywhere until you cannot stand to hear it again. Yet that song also reminds you of a fleeting, summer romance, so you listen to it with a little bit of longing as well. That is Yee's sonic point of inspiration for this play, and it is a metaphorically rich starting place.

Those songs of summer, their ubiquity and insistence, are emblematic of our contemporary consumer culture. They are forgettable, disposable, but simply everyone *has* to have them for a brief, brief time. They can be (and usually are) relentlessly vulgar, simplistically sexual, and all too often objectify women. But an entire industry is built around them, and their purveyors become impossibly and rapidly rich. And when those purveyors start to behave badly in public, we just cannot look away!

Counterpointed against this music-industrial complex reality in Yee's play is the small town of Pottsville, Pennsylvania. Like a song of summer, all Americans know this town — left behind by so-called progress, it has a dying downtown surrounded by strip malls. It is a vestige of 20th century American expansion and success, declining incrementally and in slow-motion. It is to this hometown that Yee's protagonist, Robbie Retton, returns at the height of his song of the summer's popularity. Robbie is searching, looking for the meaning of success, pulled between his small town roots and his overnight sensation. He goes back to this hometown, to the home of the piano teacher where he grew up, to the young woman who was his best friend of his youth.

But Yee's project is so much more complicated than a run-of-the-mill homecoming story, or even a simple investigation of the nature of success. She is interested in how this simple story is complicated by issues of race, by the forces of commerce, by socioeconomic standing and its perception, and ultimately how the true nature of success relates to a sense of being "home." This is not only a play about family (like almost every other play in the history of theater) but also a play about the inexorable pull of forces we cannot see, or even may not know exist.

Lauren Yee's brilliance as a playwright lies in precisely these stories, ones that trace the powerful lines we did not know were even there. She encourages us to see the interweaving of human relations in ways we had not considered. She makes us fall in love with people who might be hard to love... and then shows us why it was worth loving them all along.

So enjoy *The Song of Summer*. You know the tune. I look forward to seeing you in the theater.

Curt Columbus
The Arthur P. Solomon and Sally E. Lapides Artistic Director

WHILE MOST PLAYS WE

produce have been produced before, whether a Shakespeare

play or contemporary Broadway or regional hit, once or twice each season, we premiere a brand new work. Often we have commissioned a playwright to write a play specifically fitting your resident acting company. *The Song of Summer* by Lauren Yee marks the 70th world premiere at Trinity Rep, and represents one of the more than a dozen plays we have commissioned over the past few years thanks to the support of The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust.

As a non-profit theater company, new play development is an important part of what we do — it is the research and development work of our company, and in some ways the commercial theater. Today theaters like Trinity Rep commission and develop most of the plays and musicals that find their way to Broadway and beyond. Each summer, Trinity Rep conducts workshop readings of each of the plays in our developmental pipeline, providing a valuable tool for playwrights to hear their work read aloud by professional actors. While we workshop as many as four or five scripts each year, ultimately only one or two may actually make it to our stages.

After a play premieres, a subsequent production is never guaranteed. To help assist plays gain subsequent productions, the National New Play Network, of which Trinity Rep is an Associate Member, promotes new plays around the country. We also share the script with other producers who may be interested. Some Trinity Rep premieres have had significant life beyond Providence, including last season's hit *Into the Breeches!* by George Brant, which enjoyed four productions this season alone with others in the works.

We are excited to kick-off your 2019-20 Season with the much-anticipated premiere of one of our recent commissions, the stage adaptation (also by George Brant) of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Prince of Providence* by Mike Stanton. Last year's announcement of the commission alone gathered national news coverage, and we anticipate this production to be a blockbuster. The only way to guarantee your tickets to this sure to sell out hit is to subscribe to the full 2019-20 Season.

Next season's lineup (more about that on page 15) is packed with a mix of drama, comedy, classics, and music that is sure to surprise, delight, and entertain. There is something for everyone. From a Pulitzer Prize winner, to innovative adaptations, to the Tony Award-winning musical that won Trinity Rep resident designer Eugene Lee his second Tony Award 40 years ago, the diversity of styles reflects the variety our audiences love. You will not want to miss it! If you have not yet renewed or purchased your subscription for next season, I encourage you take advantage of our low subscription prices, beginning at only \$114 for six plays. That's less than the price of a single Broadway ticket, and it's like getting six plays for the price of four — or two plays free. In addition to guaranteeing yourself memorable evenings out and saving up to 33% off, as a full season subscriber, you get the best prices; the best seats; money-saving restaurant and parking discounts; exchange privileges; advanced, discounted access to *A Christmas Carol*; and a host of other great benefits. Performances will sell out, so subscribe today!

It's an exciting time to be a part of Trinity Rep, and we thank you for joining us today.



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ATTENTION SMOKERS: For the comfort of our patrons, we have designated a smoking area on the east side of the building along Adrian Hall Way.

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ONSTAGE NOW

A New Way FOR New Plays

by Tyler Dobrowsky

Lauren Yee, the writer of *The Song of Summer*, is one of the most produced new playwrights in the country. She is the winner of several awards, including most recently the Horton Foote Award for outstanding New American Play. She just finished writing on a new Netflix TV show, *Mixtape*, and her last play in New York, *The Great Leap*, starred Tony Award-winner B.D. Wong. Her work is being produced on a national scale, and theaters across the country are lining up to present her plays.

So how did Trinity Rep end up premiering a brand new piece by this incredible (and incredibly busy) new playwright? An excellent question!

A few years ago, Trinity Rep received some financial support from The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, specifically to commission and develop new work. Trinity Rep reached out to a number of up-and-coming playwrights, including Jackie Sibblies Drury, Marcus Gardley, Charise Castro-Smith, and Lauren Yee, and asked them to write plays for Trinity Rep, for our acting company, and for our Rhode Island community. *The Song of Summer* is one of those commissions come to life; last year's *Into the Breeches!* was another. Next year's adaptation of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Prince of Providence* is a third.

Trinity Rep doesn't give too many parameters to their commissioned writers, other than the play should be written for members of our acting company, so Lauren had free reign to create her own story. She began with a fairly simple, though intriguing premise: what happens when a one-hit wonder, riding high with the song of the summer, comes back home, to meet up with his former piano teacher and his old flame?

We started workshoping the play a few years ago, first working on a few scenes Lauren

had written and talking about the themes and characters in the play. Lauren is a wizard when it

comes to writing while in workshop, and soon the play started to take shape. We did a few more workshops over the next few years, the last one occurring this past fall in New York. (Time was of the essence for that one, since Lauren was eight-and-a-half months

pregnant!)

We also hired Max Vernon and Helen Park, two wonderful musicians and composers who recently wrote the songs for *KPOP* at Ars Nova in New York, to write the eponymous "song of the summer." As you'll see in the play, they actually had to write two versions of the song, one a more radio-friendly pop version and then another, pared-down and plaintive version.

And while no new play is ever totally finished, that is how Lauren Yee's piece came to be!

Trinity Rep's goal, however, is not just to create high-profile, nationally-recognized



LAUREN YEE

productions that will be produced around the country (though that is of course a goal), but also to make sustained, continual investments in the people of Rhode Island. To that end, here are some of the other projects we have coming down the pipeline. Not all of these pieces will make it to our stage — some of them are not even designed to be produced at our theater, per se — but all of them will, in some way, impact and reflect the different

people and places of Rhode Island.

We have commissioned Mark Valdez, a nationally recognized Latinx artist with extensive experience in community and multi-cultural work, and who directed 2016-17 Season's *Like Sheep to Water*, or *Fuente Ovejuna* and this season's production of *A Christmas Carol*, to create a story-based, community-sourced and performed theater project that aims to strengthen cross-cultural understanding. We are already in deep discussions with Mark about how to create this project, in affiliation with Rhode Island Latino Arts (RILA), one of our most important partner organizations, and particularly Marta Martinez, RILA's executive director and an acclaimed oral historian.



MARK VALDEZ

We are working with Ana Bess Moyer Bell, the founder and executive director of COAAST (Creating Outreach About Addiction Support Together) to further develop her docu-drama piece about the opioid addiction epidemic ravaging Rhode Island. Trinity Rep and Ana Bess have been in partnership the past year, providing rehearsal space as well as dramaturgical assistance as she creates her piece which will tour to community centers, libraries, and shelters throughout New England.

We will continue to commission Latinx writers from the Providence community to produce our free, mobile, bilingual summer Shakespeare series, Teatro en El Verano. This program, unique in the regional theater, provides performing opportunities for members of the Rhode Island Latinx community, and crucially makes local theater accessible to the fastest-growing population in the state.

Simply put, no other theater in the country is doing this kind of work on this scale. As we grow and expand the scope of Trinity Rep's new play development, investing in non-traditional methods, it is vital that we continue to nurture those works that are already in the pipeline and continue to add new voices to the American canon.

ONSTAGE NOW

Six Songs of the Summer

A somewhat personal selection of six very different songs of the summer by director, writer, and Brown PhD candidate, Talley Murphy

1965: "I Got You Babe" by Sonny and Cher

*"They say we're young and we don't know
We won't find out until we grow
Well I don't know if all that's true
'Cause you got me, and baby I got you"*

"I Got You Babe" is wonderful. It's light and free, but musically complex. It's a story about youth, trials, love, and coming of age in the '60s, written and performed by two hippie charmers.

Twenty years after "I Got You Babe" was the song of the summer (and ten years after their nasty split), a divorced Sonny and Cher performed the song on *Late Night With David Letterman*. If you haven't seen this, look it up when you get home. Somehow both natural and awkward, both loving and distant, the impromptu performance is pure nostalgia for loves and summers past. It'll make you sad, and it'll make you sing.

More uncomfortably, Cher performed "I Got You Babe" during her Vegas residency with projections and old audio clips of Sonny after his death. Something about this sweet waltz paired with a digital zombie of her ex seems all wrong for a song about flowers and long hair and mountains.

1981: "Jessie's Girl" by Rick Springfield

I was at a wedding this summer where people were jamming to this song. "Jessie's Girl" seems like a weird choice for your wedding playlist, but people do love to punch their fists in the air while Rick Springfield asks where he can find a woman like that.

This ode to unrequited desire has aged okay

even as we've all agreed that the Friendzone

is a myth. The music video is so wonderfully '80s: there's spray paint, sad stalking of a happy couple, and a shattered mirror.

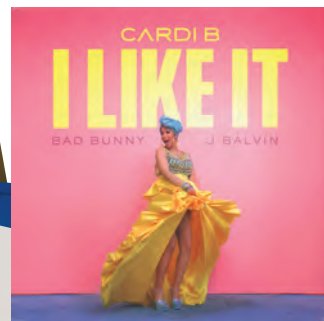
Oprah once tried to track down the aforementioned Girl, going back through school records to no avail. That poor Girl. Springfield admitted that he never really met her, but that he was "panting from afar." Yuck.

"Jessie's Girl" was originally called "Gary's Girl." Sing that in your head.

1992: "Baby Got Back" by Sir Mix-A-Lot

Is there any other song that's had as weird and long a cultural moment as "Baby Got Back"? (You know it even if you think you don't: it begins, "I like big butts and I cannot lie!"). It's featured in Nicki Minaj's "Anaconda." There's a video of Brian Williams cut together like he's singing it. There's a SpongeBob parody and a Simpsons parody. Covers range from orchestral to honky-tonk. There's literally an entire episode of *Friends* about "Baby Got Back."

Some people were scandalized by the song the summer it hit #1, but it's kind of awesome. It's not perfect (it samples some problematic audio and it's pretty male gaze-y), but at its core, it's an ode to black women — it opens with two gossipy white girls calling a woman "just so... black" because of her "gross" butt — who feel overwhelmed and alienated by pop beauty standards. It's a celebration of butts in the face



of a cult of whiteness and thinness.

*"A word to the thick soul sistas,
I want to get with ya ...
Cosmo ain't got nothin'
To do with my selection."*

The best thing about this song, though? To promote its release, a giant inflatable butt toured the country.

2003: "Crazy in Love" by Beyoncé featuring Jay-Z

Beyoncé created the chorus for "Crazy in Love" by looking at herself in the mirror. Maybe as a result, the song is as sexy and fun as Bey herself.

Post-Destiny's Child, pre-"Single Ladies," Beyoncé created her first major critical hit with "Crazy in Love." It was written and produced in a number of hours by a hungover songwriter and Beyoncé, with Jay-Z showing up for an hour to improvise his verse. It's a great music industry-lore story.

Can't you picture this scene in the eventual Beyoncé biopic? Record execs are arguing behind her about the song, but Beyoncé, ignoring them, looks into the mirror, sees herself, and says, "I've got it!" The room falls silent. She turns to look at them. "It's Crazy in Love."

2012: "Call Me Maybe" by Carly Rae Jepsen

The associate artistic director insisted that I include this song because it's his favorite. When it's stuck in your head for the rest of the week, feel free to email your complaints to tdobrowsky@trinityrep.com.

2018: "I Like It" by Cardi B with Bad Bunny and J Balvin

Okay, Cardi B is amazing. Can we talk about this? To be honest, I've never heard this song (a Google search tells me that the lyrics are really fun), but I've fallen in love with her. She's the first female rapper with multiple #1s and the first to replace herself at #1 on the charts. She stripped to work her way through school and survived being a member of the Bloods. She goes off on Instagram stories about urgent political issues with more clarity and focus than any politician. She's a big fan of FDR, the New Deal, and Eleanor Roosevelt. She did a video where she read *Fire and Fury* with Hillary Clinton. She advocated for an end to the government shutdown. She's got a pretty decent clothing collection with Fashion Nova. She's always one step ahead of interviewers. I love her, and you should too.

Also, her ASMR (autonomous sensory meridian response) video (and I hate ASMR) is incredible. She's the celebrity we all need in 2019. ■

The Teacher Who Inspired Me

by Marketing Intern Maxwell Snyder

We've all had a teacher, mentor, or supervisor growing up who encouraged us to pursue our passions. In *The Song of Summer*, Mrs. C steadfastly supports Robbie and his music career. Without her, he'd never have been able to find his voice as a musician. Resident acting company members Charlie Thurston (Robbie) and Anne Scurria (Mrs. C) share their experiences with teachers that led them to pursue their dreams.

ANNE SCURRIA • A history teacher at the high school I went to in Philadelphia, Germantown Friends School, was also the faculty member who chose and directed the plays in the fall semester. In the spring, he was the baseball coach. Private school teachers do so many things. His name was Harry Gratwick, but we called him "Handsome Harry" since he was tall and rosy cheeked and totally non-threatening. It was a nickname of endearment. He cast me as Anne in *Anne of A Thousand Days* and the mother in *Blood Wedding* by Federico García Lorca and these were pivotal experiences for me. I can remember standing in the spotlight, the auditorium completely silent, feeling so powerful and present. When I went to college, I was going to be a biology major. Majoring

in theater never crossed my mind. Then, one of my freshmen roommates was nervous about auditioning for the Shakespeare play and asked me if I'd go with her. I said sure, we went, things were slow, I was talked into auditioning, and we both ended up being cast. The play was *Twelfth Night*. She was cast as Olivia, and I was cast as Viola. That was the beginning of realizing that my passion for acting could be a career. Thanks, Mr. Gratwick!

CHARLIE THURSTON • My drama teacher in high school was a wonderful man by the name of Brian Cappello. He taught me so much about acting and about what makes theater theater; how to embrace the live-ness, the spectacle of it. We did a festival of Bertolt Brecht one acts at a public school... in Kansas. The guy did not water it down for us. I also had the privilege of working with Cappello over the summers in the warehouse of a theatrical backdrop company. There, he left the mysterious teacher realm, and I started to see him as a three-dimensional person. He was such a role model in this unassuming, mild mannered way. He was a major influence on the person and artist I've become.

Oh, and the only time I've won on a radio call-in game was at that warehouse under his tutelage. His unparalleled knowledge of classic rock won me tickets to The Doobie Brothers.

Anne and Charlie appeared together in 2016 as Grendel's Mother and Beowulf in Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage, a rock musical by Jason Craig and Dave Malloy, directed by Curt Columbus.



ONSTAGE NOW

THE ARTISTIC TEAM

LAUREN YEE

Playwright

Lauren Yee's *Cambodian Rock Band*, with music by Dengue Fever, premiered at South Coast Rep and is currently at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, followed by La Jolla Playhouse and Victory Gardens. Her play *The Great Leap* has been produced at the Denver Center, Seattle Repertory, Atlantic Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre, and American Conservatory Theatre, with future productions at Arts Club and InterAct Theatre. Honors include the Horton Foote Prize, Kesselring Prize, Primus Prize, a Hodder Fellowship at Princeton, and the #1 and #2 plays on the 2017 Kilroys List. She's a member of New Dramatists, Ma-Yi Writers' Lab member, and Playwrights Realm alumni playwright. She has written for *Mixtape* (Netflix). Current commissions include Geffen Playhouse, La Jolla Playhouse, Lincoln Center/LCT3, Portland Center Stage, Second Stage, South Coast Rep, and Trinity Rep. BA: Yale. MFA: UCSD. www.laurenyee.com

TAIBI MAGAR

Director

Taibi Magar is an Egyptian-American, Obie-winning director based in New York, and a graduate of the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA program. **Trinity Rep:** *A Christmas Carol* (2014), *The Hunchback of Seville*. **New York:** *Blue Ridge* starring Marin Ireland and *The Great Leap* starring BD Wong, Atlantic Theatre Company; *Is God Is*, Soho Rep, NYT Critics Pick, 2018 Obie Award; *Master*, The Foundry, NYT Critics Pick; *Underground Railroad Game*, Ars Nova, NYT Critics Pick. **Regional:** A.R.T., Woolly Mammoth Theatre, Alley Theatre, The Guthrie Theater, and Seattle Repertory Theatre, among others. **International:** Hamburg Festival, Edinburgh Festival, Malthouse Theatre (Melbourne), and Soho Theatre (London). **Other:** She is the recipient of a Stephen Sondheim Fellowship, Oregon Shakespeare Festival Fellowship, Public Theater Shakespeare Fellowship, and TFANA Actors and Director Project Fellowship. Taibi is an alumna of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab and a

NYTW Usual Suspect. **Upcoming:** *We Live in Cairo*, A.R.T., Boston; *The Christians*, Chautauqua Theater Company; *Spring Awakening*, Houston TUTS.

ADAM RIGG

Set Designer

Adam is a New York-based set and costume designer. He is a Princess Grace Award winner, a two-time American Theater Wing Henry Hewes Design Award nominee, a Connecticut Critics Circle Award nominee, and a multiple Ovation Award nominee. He was a recipient of the Donald Oenslager Fellowship in 2012 and the Pierre Cardin Fellowship in 2015. Recent and upcoming designs include Soho Rep, Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group, LA Opera, Signature Theater, The Guthrie, Seattle Rep, Opera Omaha, New York Theater Workshop, Williamstown Theater Festival, The Foundry Theatre, The Public Theater, Yale Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Westport Country Playhouse, REDCAT, Opera Philadelphia, Cincinnati Opera, and Manhattan Theatre Club. Adam has been a resident artist with his performance collective I Am a Boys Choir at The Public Theater (Devised Theater Working Group) and Mabou Mines. BA University of California; Los Angeles. MFA Yale School of Drama

VALÉRIE THÉRÈSE BART

Costume Designer

Selected credits include: *Noises Off*, Two River Theater; *Doll's House Part 2*, Actors Theatre Louisville; *Vietgone*, Denver Center; *Rocking Horse Winner*, Vinkensport, Opera Saratoga; *Listen, Wilhelmina!*, costumes/sets, Wolf Trap Opera; *Fidelio*, Heartbeat Opera; *You Are Here*, Goodspeed; *Rigoletto*, Minnesota Opera; *The Great Leap*, world premiere by Lauren Yee, Denver Center, Seattle Rep; *The Invisible Hand*, Cleveland Play House; *Too Heavy for Your Pocket*, Roundabout; *Vanity Fair*, world premiere by Kate Hamill, Pearl Theatre; *Butterfly*, Heartbeat Opera; *The Servant of Two Masters*, TFANA, Seattle Rep, Guthrie, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Yale Rep; *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, Bedlam, Central Square Theatre; *Macbeth*, Acting Company; Tina Packer's *Women of Will*, costumes/sets, national/international tour; *She, After*, costumes/sets, Urban Arias; *POPI!*, sets, Yale Rep. MFA Yale University School of Drama. valeriebart.com

JEANETTE OI-SUK YEW

Lighting Designer

Jeanette has designed for theater, dance, opera, musicals, music performances, and installation. *The New York Times* described her designs as "clever" and "inventive." **Recent:** *KPOP*, Hewes Design Award, LIT Design Award, Lortel and Drama Desk nominations; *Gloria: A Life*, premiere; *Fruit Trilogy*, US premiere; *BLKS*, Woolly Mammoth; *Ludic Proxy*, Bel Geddes Design Enhancement; *Intelligence*, Company XIV's *Rococo Rouge* and *Nutcracker Rouge*; *So Go the Ghosts of Mexico Part One*, Best Lighting Design nomination; *Poison*, US premiere; *Roadkill Confidential*, premiere; *In the Wake*; Erik Ehn's *Soulographie: Our Genocides*. **Other:** NEA/TCG Career Development Program recipient. jeanetteyew.com

MIKAAL SULAIMAN

Sound Designer

Trinity Rep: Last season's *Othello*. **Off-Broadway:** Recent *Alien Abductions*, *Time's Journey Through a Room*, PlayCo; *Vera Stark*, Signature Theatre; *Blue Ridge*, Atlantic Theatre; *The Thanksgiving Play*, Playwrights Horizons; *Rags Parkland*, *Underground Railroad Game*, Ars Nova; *Fairview*, Soho Rep; *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*, NYTW; *Rape of the Sabine Women*, Playwrights Realm; *Master*, Foundry Theatre Co.; *The Oldsmobiles*, The Flea. **Regional:** Berkeley Rep, The Alley, Woolly Mammoth, Trinity Rep, Pig Iron, Arden Theatre Co., Early Morning Opera, California Shakespeare Theatre. **Other:** www.mikaal.com

KRISTIN LEAHEY

Dramaturg

Kristin Leahey, Ph.D., was the Director of New Works at Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Resident Dramaturg at Northlight Theatre, and the Literary Manager at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. She has freelanced as an artist with the O'Neill Theater Center, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Guthrie Theater, Jungle Theater, Village Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Goodman Theatre, The Lark, The Kennedy Center, The Old Globe, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Cleveland Play House, Victory Gardens Theater, American Theatre Company, Collaboraction, Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, Teatro Luna, Teatro Vista (artistic associate), Steep Theatre Company (artistic associate), and A Red Orchid Theatre, among others. She is an Assistant Professor in Dramaturgy and Dramatic Literature at Boston University.

HELEN PARK

Composer

Hailing from Haeundae Beach of South Korea, Helen Park is a composer based in New York City. She is the first Asian composer or lyricist to win a Lucille Lortel Award or to be nominated for a Drama Desk Award (three times). Her recent work includes *KPOP*, her Off-Broadway musical for which she co-wrote music and lyrics. Produced by Ars Nova, Ma-Yi Theatre

This theater operates under agreements with the League of Resident Theatres, Actors' Equity Association (the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States), the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, and United Scenic Artists. Trinity Rep is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for non-profit theater; an Associate Member of the National New Play Network; and a Public Works Affiliate.



Company, and Woodshed Collective, the show received a sold-out, extended run at the A.R.T. New York Theater. *KPOP* was awarded the 2018 Richard Rodgers Award and Lucille Lortel Award for Best Musical. Helen also wrote *Baked Goods* (lyrics by Christyn Budzyna, book by Charlie Cohen) for which she won the 2018 Samuel French Short Playwriting Contest. Currently, Helen is writing songs for a new animated musical film, *Over the Moon*, directed by Academy Award-winner Glen Keane and produced by Pearl Studios and Netflix. Helen is an alumnus of NYU's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program and member of the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theater Workshop (Advanced).

MAX VERNON

Composer

Max is a three-time Drama Desk nominee, Out100 Honoree, and recipient of the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Musical, Richard Rodgers Award, Jonathan Larson Grant, New York Stage and Film's Founders Award, New York Foundation of the Arts Fellowship, and JFund Award from the Jerome Foundation. He was a Dramatist Guild Theatre Fellow, MacDowell Fellow, and artist in residence at Berkeley Rep, Ars Nova, Kimmel Center (via The Public Theater), Disney Creative Entertainment, and Rhinebeck Writer's Retreat, among others. His musical, *The View UpStairs*, ran 105 performances Off-Broadway and has had productions around the world; the original cast recording is on Broadway Records. His musical *KPOP* had a sold-out, extended run at Ars Nova and was the most nominated Off-Broadway show of the 2017-18 season. Notable concert performances include the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center, Joe's Pub, and Metropolitan Museum of Art.

ADDITIONAL STAFF

Assistant Director Tatyana-Marie Carlo
Fight Director Angie Jepson

THE CAST

TINA CHILIP*

Tina



Trinity Rep: Tina is thrilled to be back at Trinity Rep, where she was in the 2005 production of *A Christmas Carol*. **Off-Broadway:** Fiasco Theatre's *Twelfth Night*, Classic Stage Company; *House Rules*, *Flipzoids*, Ma-Yi Theatre; *Golden Child*, Signature Theatre; *A Dream Play*, National Asian American Theatre Company. **Regional:** *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, Actors Theatre of Louisville; *All The Roads Home*, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park; *Tokyo Fish Story*, The Old Globe; *after all the terrible things I do*, Huntington Theatre (IRNE nomination,

Best Actress); *Kodachrome*, *Our Town*, Portland Center Stage; *Chinglish*, Portland Center Stage and Syracuse Stage; *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide...*, Berkeley Rep; *M. Butterfly*, Guthrie Theatre. **Television:** *Marvel Series* (recurring role), *Deception*, *Elementary*, *Madam Secretary*, *Royal Pains*, *Mysteries of Laura*. **Upcoming:** *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Cymbeline*, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. **Other:** MFA in Acting, Brown/Trinity Rep. Member of The Actors Center.

ANNE SCURRIA* ‡

Mrs. C



Trinity Rep: This is Anne's 40th season, and *The Song of Summer* is her 31st American or world premiere. Highlights from over 100 productions: Virginia Butley, *Native Gardens*; Maggie Dalton, *Into the Breeches*; Marion Stevens, *Faithful Cheaters*; Grendel's Mother, *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*; Julius Caesar, *Julius Caesar*; Amanda, *The Glass Menagerie*; Meg, *A Lie of the Mind*; Ma Joad, *The Grapes of Wrath*; Marion, *Absurd Person Singular*; Elizabeth, *The Syringa Tree*; Homebody, *Homebody/Kabul*; Vivian Bearing, *Wit*; Martha, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*; Lady Macbeth, *Macbeth*; Lil Bit, *How I Learned to Drive*; Scrooge, *A Christmas Carol*; Mary Tyrone, *Long Day's Journey Into Night*. **Other Theaters:** Public Theater, Circle Rep, Intiman Theatre, Arena Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Long Wharf Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Lyric Stage, SpeakEasy Stage, New Century Theater, Perseverance Theatre. **Other:** Anne was a Kaplan Fellow and a graduate of the Trinity Rep Conservatory. She teaches acting in the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA Program.

CHARLIE THURSTON* ‡

Robbie



Trinity Rep: A company member since 2013: Tateh, *Ragtime*; Cassio, *Othello*; "Betsy" Benini, Jr., *Faithful Cheaters*; Beowulf, *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*; Carly, *Oklahoma!*; Peter Patrone, *The Heidi Chronicles*; Frank, *Melancholy Play: a chamber musical*; Paul Bratter, *Barefoot in the Park*; Frankie, *A Lie of the Mind*; Bob Cratchit, *A Christmas Carol*; Muley Graves, *The Grapes of Wrath*; Mr. Smith, *Social Creatures*; Edgar, *The Completely Fictional — Utterly True — Final Strange Tale of Edgar Allan Poe*. **Other Theaters:** Goodspeed Musicals, Cleveland Play House, Fault Line Theatre, The Williams Project (company member), Intiman Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Baltimore Center Stage, Bread Loaf Acting Ensemble, Chautauqua Theater Company, Creede Rep, Riverside Theatre,

Redmoon Theater. **Film/TV:** *Life, Itself*; *Money Monster*, *Law & Order SVU*. **Other:** MFA in Acting, Brown/Trinity Rep.

JOE WILSON, JR.* ‡

Joe



Trinity Rep: In 13 seasons, plays include: *black odyssey* (co-director and the role of Ulysses), *The Mountaintop*, *Oklahoma!* (IRNE Award), *Julius Caesar*, *Intimate Apparel*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Clybourne Park*, *Camelot*, *Yellowman*, *Cabaret*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *A Christmas Carol*, *All The King's Men*, *The Fantasticks*, *Cherry Orchard*, *Topdog/Underdog* (IRNE Award), *Ain't Misbehavin'* (IRNE Award), *Hamlet*. **Broadway:** *Iceman Cometh* (2018 Tony Nominated Best Revival) starring Denzel Washington, *Jesus Christ Superstar* (2000 Tony Nominated Best Revival). **Off Broadway:** *Little Ham* and *Josephine's Song*. **Regional:** Huntington, Penumbra, North Shore Music Theatre, Alliance, McCarter, Syracuse Stage, Guthrie, Ordway Music Theatre, Children's Theatre Company, New Rep, and American Players. **Other:** MFA, Univ. of Minnesota/Guthrie; BA, Notre Dame. Joe and Trinity Rep participated in the Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowships, funded by the William & Eva Fox Foundation and administered by Theatre Communications Group. He is on the board of the Manton Avenue Project, the South Side Cultural Center in Providence, RI, and The Center for Reconciliation. Joe is also proud to serve as the Coordinator of Activism through Performance at Trinity Rep.

SARA SHEETS*

Production Stage Manager

Trinity Rep: Production stage manager: *Into the Breeches*, *Appropriate*, *The Hunchback of Seville*. Assistant stage manager: *A Christmas Carol*. *Oklahoma!*, *Melancholy Play: a chamber musical*. Production assistant: *A Flea in her Ear*, *Middletown*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *Ivanov*, *A Lie of the Mind*, *Oliver!* **Other Theaters:** Theatre by the Sea, The Sandra-Feinstein Gamm Theatre, Gloucester Stage Company, Sharon Playhouse, Brown/Trinity Rep.

WILLIAM DERBY

William Derby is a sixth grader who goes to the Gordon School. He has been part of Trinity Rep's Young Actors Summer Institute (YASI) for two years, and has written part of a modern adaptation of the play *Dr. Faustus* there.

* Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.

‡ Trinity Rep Resident Acting Company member

Perfect for Each Other

Rebecca Gibel and Jude Sandy reunite this spring as another pair of musical lovebirds in Little Shop of Horrors

Caitlin Howle, Trinity Rep's digital marketing coordinator, recently sat down with Jude Sandy, who plays Seymour, and Rebecca Gibel, who plays Audrey, in our upcoming production of *Little Shop of Horrors* to talk about the show, the music, and the two reuniting for the production.

Caitlin Howle: Let's talk shop — *Little Shop* that is. Can you both tell about your past experiences with *Little Shop of Horrors*? What was your first interaction with the production?

Rebecca Gibel: I've never performed in it except in my shower! But for children of the '80s, there's that movie you watch so much you wear

The whole show was a thrill.

CH: I feel like this is a show where we can really get behind the characters. How do you feel about Seymour and Audrey? What do you feel their motivations are in this show?

JS: I feel a lot of solidarity with Seymour, and I have a lot of affection for him and Audrey as a pair. They're the outsiders. They're misfits, an experience I know too well. They're the people that the world doesn't really want. These two people who just want to be loved and just want to be seen and validated. And they finally get that validation, but in the most deceiving circumstances, in this whirlwind of fleeting success and celebrity before disaster hits.

RG: In my 16-year-old fantasy, I would just love to be Ellen Greene as Audrey, who played her off-Broadway and in the film. She so stamped that role for me. My feelings about Audrey are so steeped in my teenage feelings about Greene's interpretation. I can't wait to get inside and start poking around and figuring out what my Audrey's appetite is! (Pun mostly intended...)

CH: I'm excited to meet her, too. Why do you think *Little Shop of Horrors* speaks to an audience in 2019? How can we relate to what started out as campy sci-fi?

JS: We're often taught to look for something to save us and for me, the story is so much about how easily people can be enticed into giving away their souls for the sake of the thing they dream will rescue them or the thing they think will make life better. What if the thing that will make life better has been in front of you all along, right? What if

Audrey and Seymour had found each other before fame and money seduced them? And I love the campy sci-fi and the music because it's what makes the ride so incredibly delicious, and before you know it, all hell breaks loose.

CH: Do you see that in the show?

JS: Absolutely. If Audrey and Seymour actually just could break through whatever barriers exist to their seeing each other for who they are and appreciating each other and knowing how perfect they are for each other from the get-go, then they probably would have not been beguiled into destruction.

RG: I think there's something parallel and juicy about how we're living in this age when social media and politics and self and community are all slamming into each other, and then becoming monstrous because of how we want to project ourselves to our audience — we all have an audience now. And that's what happens to Seymour, that's part of what he gets enticed by with this whole layer of fame and projection of self. He wants the life that he sees projected around him.

JS: We all do, right? We're the ones who feed this kind of obsession with fame, with image, and I think that's what the characters of this show do, too. We allow ourselves to be captivated by glamor and surface and we don't take the time to think through the more difficult, thorny realities of our lives, our relationships, our social responsibility, our needs as human beings, and how those needs are true for others. We see all the characters in *Little Shop of Horrors* struggling to find their foothold in the world, to succeed, to be happy, and that's something we can all relate to.

CH: How do you feel walking into such a powerhouse of a musical? Are you excited about the music and the songs?

JS: There's not a single role in this musical that I didn't wish I could play since the music is just phenomenal. It's really accessible, you can sing along to it, and just be swept away by the drive and the melody of it. There's also this yearning and heartache in the music, too. It's full of meaning.

RG: The thing that I love is that all the songs drive the plot forward. You can't pull those songs out — any of them!

CH: And last, but not least, we last saw you both in last season's production of *Othello* — how do you both feel about reuniting for this production?

RG: I can't wait! My favorite thing ever is to work with Jude, I love it.

JS: I'm completely over the moon, too. Audrey's a character I've always dreamed to see Becky play. Can anyone forget her Ado Annie?! I almost can't believe I get to hold her hand again and take this wild ride with her. It's wonderful to be back together.

Little Shop of Horrors runs April 11 – May 12 in the Chace Theater. ■



Jude and Rebecca have sung about their love for one another before, as Will Parker and Ado Annie in Trinity Rep's 2016 production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Oklahoma!*, directed by Richard and Sharon Jenkins. PHOTO BY MARK TUREK

out the VHS tape? *Little Shop of Horrors* was that for me.

Jude Sandy: My first real encounter was when I assistant directed it with Amanda Dehnert, (former interim Trinity Rep artistic director) at Cleveland Play House in 2015. She turned the female chorus into a five-piece all-girl rock band!

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Trinity Rep has long been committed to making theater for and with its community — and next season, we're putting Providence on stage like never before with the world premiere

of *The Prince of Providence* — a look at one of our city's most famous (and infamous) personalities, Vincent A. "Buddy" Cianci.

The play is based on The New York Times bestseller *The Prince of Providence: The Life and Times of Buddy Cianci, America's Most Notorious Mayor, Some Wiseguys, and the Feds* by Mike Stanton and adapted for the stage by playwright George Brant, whose play *Into the Breeches!* premiered at Trinity Rep last year. We commissioned George to write the script in early 2018, and now, after a series of drafts, workshops, and revisions, we are thrilled to include this exciting new show in the 2019-20 Season lineup.

In addition to Mike Stanton's book, Buddy's

The Prince Returns to Providence

Buddy Cianci comes back to life on Trinity Rep's stage

By Kate Brandt

He eventually spent more than four years in federal prison, but ran for office again after his release in 2014, though he ultimately lost to Jorge Elorza. In addition to his time in politics, Cianci was also a local radio host between times in office and created his own line of pasta sauce.

While reviled by many for his behavior in office, he is simultaneously celebrated by many who credit him for the growth of the city under his tenure. Notably, Providence became cleaner and more welcoming to tourists and artists during his

make his life story perfect for the stage. Though his story is universally appealing, and announcement of the play commission received national attention, we at Trinity Rep are particularly excited to share his story with those who lived through it and still live with the effects of his time as mayor every day.

Artistic Director Curt Columbus sees the enormous potential to create a play uniquely suited for local audiences. "At Trinity Rep, we make it our job to investigate the mythical, the historical, and the epic. Buddy Cianci's story is all three of those things, and it is woven into the heart muscle of Providence, RI, our home. This project is one of the most exciting that we've undertaken. I can't wait to share George's brilliant play with our audiences."

Playwright George Brant's first commission for Trinity Rep, *Into the Breeches!*, had an extremely successful debut in January 2018 and has gone on to productions at Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Festival St. Louis, Chautauqua Theater, and Northlight Theater. He is also well-known for the international phenomenon *Grounded*, which received over 100 productions in 17 countries, including a successful off-Broadway production starring Anne Hathaway. He is the recipient of numerous national awards including the Lucille Lortel Award, the Edgerton Foundation New Play Award, the David Mark Cohen National Playwriting Award, and the Smith Prize, among many others. In addition to *Grounded* his works include *Elephant's Graveyard*, *Marie and Rosetta*, *Grizzly Mama*, *Good on Paper*, *The Mourner's Bench* (produced at Trinity Rep in 2012), and *Salvage*.

The play is slated to be directed by Taibi Magar, whose long list of impressive credits also includes today's play, *The Song of Summer*. Taibi is a graduate of the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA program in Directing. Since graduating, she has taken the helm of productions around the country and internationally. Her work in New York includes *Is God Is* at Soho Rep, for which she won the 2018 Obie Award for directing.

The original novel was written by Mike Stanton, who is an author, investigative reporter, and associate professor of journalism at the University of Connecticut. He worked for years as a sports writer and investigative reporter for *The Providence Journal*, where he shared a Pulitzer Prize.

Buddy's story is known throughout Rhode Island and beyond, and even to those who don't consider themselves to be politically-minded. But how will the epic story of such a legendary character fit into the span of a single play? Which of the good parts and the not-so-good parts of his story will make the cut? And who will play this juicy role? Well...those answers and many more will come in due time.

Tickets for *The Prince of Providence* are currently on sale only to 2019-20 Season subscribers. The single ticket on-sale date will be announced this summer. ■



There was hardly a single event at Trinity Rep that Buddy Cianci did not attend as mayor, including the above capital campaign announcement on the Dowling stage in 1998. From left: Mary Higgins, Malcolm and Elizabeth Z. Chace, Oskar Eustis, Buddy Cianci, Johnnie Chace, and Buff Chace. PHOTO BY JOHN C. MEYERS

life has also been chronicled in his own memoir, *Politics and Pasta*; in the podcast *Crimetown*; and on stage in *Buddy Cianci: The Musical*, as part of the 2003 New York Fringe Festival.

Over the course of two decades, Cianci was elected mayor of Providence seven times, but removed from office twice. In 1984, he left office after pleading no contest to assault charges, and in 2002 he was convicted of racketeering conspiracy.

second stint as mayor, during which time the rivers were moved to create Waterplace Park and the Riverwalk, the Providence Bruins came to town, and the Providence Place Mall and downtown skating rink opened.

Whether people admire or despise him, everyone can agree that Buddy Cianci's story is one of the most unique and interesting in modern politics. His practically-Shakespearean qualities

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The Prince of Providence

By George Brant

*Based on the novel The Prince of Providence
by Mike Stanton*

Directed by Taibi Magar

September 12 – October 20, 2019

The nation knows him from *Crimetown* and *Operation Plunder Dome*, but Providence has a deeper and more complicated relationship with Buddy Cianci. A charismatic visionary who was also a corrupt philanderer, the long-time mayor defied the odds time after time — from his very first election to winning again after being arrested on assault charges. Surrounded by a colorful carousel of characters, Buddy gave Providence many things: some are more visible - businesses, tourism, and relocated rivers — while others are less tangible, but no less real — pride, notoriety, and now, a great story to tell.

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A Christmas Carol

By Charles Dickens

Original music by Richard Cumming

Directed by Kate Bergstrom

November 7 – December 29, 2019

Rhode Island's family holiday classic returns with the joyful story of Ebenezer Scrooge's journey from solitude to redemption. Inspired by Tiny Tim and the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future, Scrooge learns lessons that remind us all about the true spirit of the season. Trinity Rep's magical, music-filled production continues to delight New England audiences.

Fade

By Tanya Saracho

December 5, 2019 – January 5, 2020

Lucia is understandably nervous. It's day one at her first TV writing job. As a Mexican-born novelist, she may actually be the "diversity hire" she's heard whispers about. Uncertain whether she can make a place for herself in cutthroat Hollywood, at least she feels less alone when she meets Abel, the Latino janitor. They form a bond and share stories, but it turns out that what Lucia gains from their friendship is not what Abel expects in this witty dramatic comedy about class, integrity, and culture.

August Wilson's Radio Golf

Directed by Jude Sandy

January 30 – March 1, 2020

Real estate developer and entrepreneur Harmond Wilks is determined to become the first black mayor of Pittsburgh and is on a mission to revive his blighted childhood neighborhood. As Wilks confronts the past, he is forced to question how pursuing change could put his neighborhood's history at risk. Both moving and funny, *Radio Golf* is the culmination of August Wilson's ten-play American Century Cycle chronicling each decade of African-American life in the 20th century.

A Tale of Two Cities

By Brian McEleney

Based on the novel by Charles Dickens

Directed by Tyler Dobrowsky

February 20 – March 22, 2020

In the late 1700s, London and Paris face parallel states of social and political upheaval on the eve of the French Revolution. Against this tumultuous backdrop emerges a passionate story of romance, sacrifice, and vengeance. This fresh new adaptation is epic and universal, while also being intensely intimate and personal. "The best of times and the worst of times" are brought to vivid life on stage in this remarkable approach to the time-honored classic

Sweat

By Lynn Nottage

April 2 – May 3, 2020

Warm humor and tremendous heart permeate this Pulitzer Prize-winner and hit Broadway play. Deep in the Rust Belt, blue collar factory workers swear by longtime friendships that seem unbreakable. These women spend their days working at physically-demanding jobs and their evenings laughing over drinks and dreaming of retirement. But mistrust, pride, and the economic pressures from a changing America introduce fissures in the foundation of this chosen family. Soon the bonds shatter, forever altering the path of two generations.

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Book by Hugh Wheeler

Directed by Curt Columbus

April 23 – May 24, 2020

An indisputable masterpiece by America's greatest living Broadway composer and lyricist, this is a heart-pounding thriller set on the seedy side streets of 19th-century London. Filled with diabolical humor and extraordinary music, this eight-time Tony Award-winning musical tells the tale of an exiled barber's quest to avenge the wrongs done to him and his family. *Sweeney Todd* is a beautiful, soaring dark comedy filled with stunning terror that will leave you gasping! ■

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*It's not too late to take advantage of the savings, security, and benefits that come with subscribing to Trinity Rep. **Lock in discounts of up to 33%** and don't miss any of the heart-stopping, stirring, and unforgettable productions this spring. Secure great seats and the knowledge that you can exchange — with no fee — whenever plans change. **You can apply the cost of your ticket to The Song of Summer to a 3-Play Subscription and see the remaining shows of the season at a discount!***



The Song of Summer

by Lauren Yee
Directed by Taibi Magar
March 14 – April 14, 2019

That song on every radio and wedding DJ's play list — that catchy earworm that's inescapable for an entire summer — the "song of the summer" ...there's more to it than everyone knows. There's more to know about its singer, too — like why he snuck away from a concert and traveled hundreds of miles to visit the home of his childhood piano teacher. What — and who — he finds there could change his career and his life. A touching story about how revisiting the past can change our future.



Little Shop of Horrors

Book & Lyrics
by Howard Ashman
Music by Alan Menken
Directed by Tyler Dobrowsky
April 11 – May 12, 2019

A perennially-popular, award-winning musical, *Little Shop of Horrors* blends doo-wop, rock, and Motown into a charming and totally-twisted must-see event. A strange and unusual plant seems like just the thing to save a beleaguered Skid Row flower shop and its hapless employees, Seymour and Audrey. But when that plant turns out to feed only on blood and is inclined toward world-domination, well... things get a little messy. This deviously-delicious musical will be fun for the whole family.



Marisol

by José Rivera
Directed by Brian Mertes
May 16 – June 16, 2019

Marisol goes to bed in her New York City apartment, but awakens after a visit from her guardian angel to a surreal and crumbling new reality. The Bronx has become a battlefield as leather-clad angels take up arms against an old and dying God in a war to save the universe. The moon has disappeared, food has turned to salt, and chaos follows Marisol at every turn as she attempts to find hope among the ruins in this primal, poetic, fantastical, and often humorous contemporary classic.

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ABOVE L TO R: Charlie Thurston,
Jude Sandy & Mia Ellis



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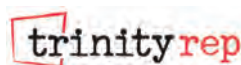
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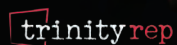
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Trinity Rep's celebrated resident acting company members make Providence their home and are proud to be a part of the community. They provide an artistic foundation that allows directors and playwrights to achieve heightened levels of creativity and encourage the audience to feel more connected to the organization.


Community connections are made and strengthened daily through robust education and engagement programs. In a single season Trinity Rep's educational programs reach 20,000 Southern New England students through performances, in-school visits, and backstage workshops. Engagement opportunities range from conversations with artists to community partnerships. Trinity Rep is committed to inclusion at every level of the organization, including programs like open captioning and sensory-friendly performances.

Located in downtown Providence, Trinity Rep has long been a driving force behind the creativity that fuels and defines the region. From its roots in Providence's Trinity United Methodist Church, Trinity Rep moved in 1973 to its present home, the Lederer Theater Center in downtown Providence. Built in 1917 and formerly known as the Majestic Theater, the historic building now houses two performance spaces: the Elizabeth and Malcolm Chace Theater (500+ seats) and the Sarah and Joseph Dowling, Jr. Theater (200+ seats.)

Employing over 100 artists, educators, and administrators, the organization generates nearly \$12 million in economic activity annually.

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Trinity Rep is committed to reinventing the public square and inspiring dialogue by creating emotionally-stimulating live productions and innovative education programs for all ages and abilities. Whether classical or contemporary, all of Trinity Rep's productions connect audiences with the play in meaningful and sometimes surprising ways. Its annual production of *A Christmas Carol* is new every year and has brought families together for over 40 years.

Artistic director since 2006, Curt Columbus has embraced the Trinity Rep aesthetic established by founding Artistic Director Adrian Hall and continued by his successors: Anne Bogart, Richard Jenkins, Oskar Eustis, and Amanda Dehnert. Together, with Executive Director Tom Parrish, Columbus is committed to creating unparalleled theatrical experiences for and with the community. 



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STAFF FOR TRINITY REP

CURT COLUMBUS

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Curt Columbus became Trinity Repertory Company's fifth artistic director in January 2006. He is also the artistic director of the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA programs in Acting and Directing. His directing credits for Trinity

include *Ragtime*, *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*, *Middletown*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *His Girl Friday*, *Camelot*, *Cabaret*, *Blithe Spirit*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Cherry Orchard*, and the world premieres of *The Completely Fictional—Utterly True—Final Strange Tale of Edgar Allen Poe* and *Social Creatures*. Trinity Rep has been home to the world premieres of three of his plays, *Paris by Night*, *The Dreams of Antigone*, and *Sparrow Grass*, and produced his translations of Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* and *Ivanov*, as well as Feydeau's *A Flea in Her Ear* and Lope de Vega's *Like Sheep to Water, or Fuente Ovejuna*. Curt's adaptation of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (with Marilyn Campbell) has won awards and accolades around the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia. His translation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, developed at the Arden Theatre in Philadelphia, is published by Dramatists Play Service, as is *Sparrow Grass* and his translations of Chekhov's *Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Cherry Orchard*, and *Ivanov*. Curt lives in Providence, Rhode Island with his husband, Nate Watson.

TOM PARRISH Executive Director



Leading Trinity Rep since 2015, Tom Parrish is responsible for the organization's audience and donor development and financial management. Previously, he served successful tenures as executive director of Geva

Theatre Center and Merrimack Repertory Theatre. He also worked at Arena Stage, Cleveland Play House, Dallas Theater Center, and San Diego Repertory Theatre. He is currently involved on the boards or committees of the League of Resident Theatres, Theatre Forward, Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Providence Foundation, and the Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau. Awards include a NAACP Theatre Award for Best Producer and "Forty Under 40" recognition in Providence, Rochester, the Merrimack Valley, and San Diego. He received his MBA/MA, Arts Administration from Southern Methodist University; BA in Theater Arts and Economics from Case Western Reserve University; and attended the National Theater Institute and Harvard Business School's Strategic Perspectives in Nonprofit Management.

TYLER DOBROWSKY Associate Artistic Director



Tyler Dobrowsky has been a member of the education, literary, and artistic teams since 2003. He founded YASI (Young Actors Summer Institute), Trinity Rep's summer program for children, as well as Shakespeare en el Verano

(Shakespeare in the Summer), Trinity Rep's touring bilingual summer Shakespeare project. Directing credits at Trinity Rep include: *Into the Breeches!* a world premiere by George Brant; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; *Julius Caesar*; *A Flea in Her Ear*; *It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*; *Love Alone* (a world premiere with the playwright Deb Salem Smith), and *A Christmas Carol*. Directing credits at the Gamm: *The Big Meal*, *Morality Play*, *The Rant*, *American Buffalo* and *Incognito*. Tyler has taught at NYU's Tisch School for the Arts as well as at the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA program, and his work has been seen at Asolo Rep and UNC/Playmakers Rep. Tyler runs Trinity Rep's new play development programs, serves on the board of Rhode Island Latino Arts, and is a proud member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers union. He received his MA in Education Policy from Brown University, and studied history, theater, and Russian at Holy Cross. He lives in Providence with his wife, Taibi.

LAURA SMITH Production Director



Ms. Smith is in her 22nd season with Trinity Rep. She was the associate production manager at Trinity Rep for six years and the capital projects manager for two years, overseeing the construction of the Pell Chafee

Performance Center. In the past, she has been the production manager for the Department of Theatre, Speech and Dance at Brown University and the Berkshire Opera Company. She has also stage managed for institutions such as the Metropolitan Opera, the New York Philharmonic, and the Juilliard School. ■

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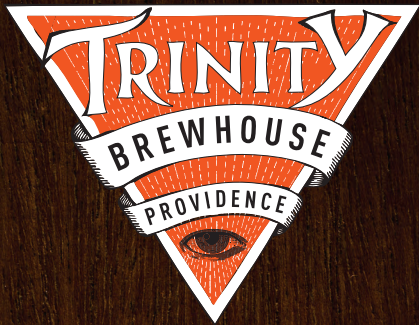
Macbeth by William Shakespeare • January 31 – March 3, 2019

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Waking Up to a World That's Falling Apart

Brian Mertes directs this spring's production of Marisol, a primal, poetic, fantastical, and often humorous contemporary classic.

by Caitlin Howle

In the early 1990s, José Rivera introduced the world to his play *Marisol*. This apocalyptic urban fantasy urged its audiences to find a way to recover from the world around them, especially in times of suffering and hurt. Brian Mertes will be directing Trinity Rep's production this spring, and in a conversation with him, he spoke about his history with Rivera's work and why *Marisol* is more relevant today than ever before — and about what Trinity Rep audiences can expect from this powerhouse of a show.

Serving as the head of the Brown University/Trinity Rep MFA directing program, Mertes was most recently at the helm of Trinity Rep productions of *The Glass Menagerie* (2015) and *Appropriate* (2017). He has taught directing for Columbia University and New York University and has been lauded in his career, winning an Emmy in directing, along with three nominations, among numerous other accolades.

Mertes is no stranger to Rivera's work, having read *Marisol* when it debuted in 1992. He said, "I love this play, and I've loved it since it first showed up on the scene." He first met Rivera when he was working on John Bardon's *The Greeks* at Juilliard in 2009. Mertes says that Rivera pressed to find him, saying that the playwright saw his production and said, "Who made that? I have to meet them." The two hit it off and Rivera loved Mertes' work

so much that he invited him to direct the world premiere of his new play, *Massacre* (*Sing to Your Children*) at the Rattlestick Playwrights Theater in New York in 2012. Mertes says of Rivera, "We had such a great time working together. He's a remarkable human being, artist, writer, and I consider him a statesman of the American theater."

Rivera won the 1993 Obie award in playwrighting for *Marisol*, and it took audiences by storm when it debuted at The Actors Theatre of Louisville's Humana Festival in 1992.

Marisol firmly plants our audience into a world where the titular main character is a young Puerto Rican woman working a white-collar job in Manhattan, at a scientific publishing company. She's making decent money, but instead of relocating to a better neighborhood, Marisol stays firmly rooted in her borough of the Bronx.

On her way home one night, Marisol is attacked on the subway by someone. After narrowly escaping, she faces more violence in her home, her safe space. Mertes reminds audiences, "That's not uncommon. It's rare, but it's not uncommon. It happens here. It happens everywhere." That night, in bed, she is visited by an angel who reveals that she is the reason that Marisol has managed to stay alive so long. She has helped her survive — but something dreadful is about to happen — and the angel must leave her. The angel continues to explain that God is aging, and going senile, and that all of the angels

— Marisol's included — are going to war against the dying god. Marisol is on her own for the first time in her life. "It's a world that's falling apart. There is a level of misbehavior all around, all the time. War is now and on the horizon and around us all the time," said Mertes.

With all of the angels fighting and no longer watching the mortals that they protect, the world falls apart. Food turns to salt, violence and hate surround her, and Marisol is all alone. Mertes explains, "We all take a journey that is unexpected and unwelcome that must be taken at some point in our lives. We have to be ready. We all leave a place that we don't want to leave. We all connect with people that we haven't seen in forever. What do those moments feel like? That's part of what we hope to capture."

Though *Marisol* flirts with darkness, Mertes reassures us that it's not all doom and gloom. "It's about having a human moment with each other where we all can take a breath together and let our guard down. What I keep hearing from so many people is that we need a healing space." As a director, Mertes knows he can rise to the challenge of bringing such a deep and rich story to the stage. He said, "I get two hours to show this story, which is nothing in life. I have to be incredibly responsible for the audience's time. The journey of this play is us all being in a space together and having the experience of Marisol letting her guard down, if only for a moment." ■



Brian Mertes is a master at envisioning worlds that are falling apart.

In his 2017 production of *Appropriate* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins at Trinity Rep, a family's rocky relationships implode when their dead patriarch's horrifying secrets are discovered. Pictured from left to right are Alec J. Weinberg, Angela Brazil, Marina Morrissey, Fred Sullivan, Jr., Mauro Hantman, and Phyllis Kay. ■

PHOTO BY MARK TUREK

NEXT ATTRINITY REP

*An other-wordly
perspective*

Marisol

by José Rivera

DIRECTED BY BRIAN MERTES

TICKETS START AT \$25

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YOUNG ACTORS STUDIO SPRING SESSION (8 weekly classes)

Grades K-1: Tuesdays 4:00-5:00 pm, March 26 – May 21, 2019, \$150

Grades 2-4: Tuesdays, 5:15-6:15 pm, March 26 – May 21, 2019, \$150

Grades 5-7: Saturdays, 1:00-2:00 pm, March 23 – May 18, 2019, \$150

Grades 8-12: Saturdays, 2:30-4:00 pm, March 23 – May 18, 2019, \$225

YOUNG ACTORS SUMMER INSTITUTE

Registration is open now for the 2019 Young Actors Summer Institute (YASI), one of the most comprehensive summer arts enrichment programs in New England. From July 1 through August 2, students entering grades 5-12 and graduated seniors (ages 10-18) choose from a variety of electives, including playwriting, musical theater, improvisation, Shakespeare, stage combat, and more. Taught by Trinity Rep's acting company, education staff, Brown/Trinity Rep MFA students and alums, and local working artists, YASI culminates in two public performances on the Trinity Rep stage. There is an optional extension week for high school students called **YASI Shakes**.

YASI Players is a week-long program for students in grades 5-9, who rehearse, stage, and perform a new family-friendly play in one week, August 5-9.

YASI Jr. is our week-long, half-day program for young performers focusing on the fundamentals of acting. June 24-28 for students entering grades 1-4.

YASI Masters is a week-long program for high school and college students looking to deepen their practice in a variety of concentrations, taught by our resident acting company and artistic staff in intensive three-hour sessions, June 24-27.

For more information about or to register for these programs (and more!), please visit trinityrep.com/education and click on Engage and Learn.

PHOTO BY MARK TUREK

[illegible]

MAY 21, 2019

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We are profoundly grateful for the individual philanthropic support we receive each season. For patrons looking to deepen their engagement and are able to make a yearly commitment of at least \$1,200, there is the **Inner Circle**. Donors who join the Inner Circle receive some exciting benefits in return.

First and foremost is access to your **personal concierge service**: David Azulay, Manager of VIP Services and Special Events, can take care of all your ticketing needs at Trinity Rep (if you need to switch your show date, or want to add to your party), recommend and secure dinner reservations, and book seats at theaters across the country, on Broadway, and beyond.

In addition, Inner Circle donors are invited to exclusive behind-the-scenes events throughout the year. There's the Inner Circle Dinner series, where you join artists for a **pre-show dinner and private prologue** at Gracie's, one of our fabulous restaurant partners, or at a catered dinner here at the theater, to learn a little more about the performance you're about to see. Last season, we chatted with playwright George Brant about his new play *Into the Breeches!*; *Othello* leads and resident actors Rebecca Gibel and Jude Sandy mixed and mingled before giving attendees an insider's perspective on their characters and director Whitney White's process; and *Ragtime* visiting artist Taavon Gamble talked about his regional career — and what keeps him coming back to Trinity Rep. It's a great time to **get to know your artists, staff, and each other better, while also learning secrets from the shows**. And dinner is on us!

We are always planning fun opportunities for you to engage with Trinity Rep. These may include coming to **observe a working rehearsal** — being in the room with the creative team in real time; **cocktail parties** at the theater and around the state to chat with the resident acting company, artistic director Curt Columbus, executive director Tom Parrish, and exciting visiting artists; and delicious celebratory **brunches** at some of the city's hottest spots, where we get the chance to thank you directly for your incredible generosity.

For more information on how you can become an Inner Circle donor, or any of the benefits, contact Assistant Director of Development Kate Kataja at kkataja@trinityrep.com or (401) 453-9285. ■

BELOW, L TO R: Curt Columbus, Sharon Jenkins, and Richard Jenkins at an Inner Circle brunch event.



Join the Inner Circle with a gift of \$1,200 or more for exclusive invitations to exciting events & behind-the-scenes opportunities!



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If you are 70.5 years old or older and have an individual retirement account (IRA), you can transfer up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to one or more qualified charities, meeting your required minimum distribution and avoiding income tax (the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 retained this provision). Transfers must go directly from your IRA to Trinity Rep, which can be particularly useful to donors who no longer file itemized returns.

Here is a recap of the IRA rollover rules:

- You can make a direct transfer if you are age 70.5 or older on the day of the gift and you transfer directly from an IRA to one or more qualified charities. Speak to your IRA manager to initiate a gift. For year-end giving, it's best to initiate requests prior to Thanksgiving.
- The gift can satisfy all or part of a required minimum IRA distribution for the year.
- You pay no income tax on the gift. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction.
- The gift may not be used to fund a gift annuity, charitable remainder trust, donor advised fund, or a private foundation.
- You cannot receive goods or services in return for the rollover.

For more information about planned giving options at Trinity Rep, call (401) 453-9285. ■

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Trinity Rep's donors play a critical role in our ability to create Tony Award-winning theater in and for our community. Your essential support makes it all possible: presenting high-quality, vibrant productions; a powerful and unique new play development program; bold, rich conversation in our communities; and in-depth, unparalleled education opportunities for students of all ages.



*Trinity Rep encourages creativity, empathy, and the ability to dream big.
Make a gift today and help us keep dreaming.*

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*You can also give through your IRA Rollover, charitable trust, or donor advised fund.
Contact us with any questions.*

L TO R: RICHARD DONELLY, REBECCA GIBEL, JOE WILSON, JR., KATIE CROYLE,
ANGELA BRAZIL & SHELLEY FORT IN *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE* • PHOTO BY MARK TUREK

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Playwright-in-Residence Deborah Salem Smith
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Jackie Sibblies Drury, Marcus Gardley, Orlando Hernandez
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March 14 – April 14, 2019 • Dowling Theater

That song on every radio and wedding DJ's playlist — that catchy earworm that's inescapable for an entire summer — the "song of the summer" ...there's more to it than everyone knows. There's more to know about its singer, too — like why he snuck away from a concert and traveled hundreds of miles to visit the home of his childhood piano teacher. What — and who — he finds there could change his career and his life. A touching story about how revisiting the past can change our future.

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
MAR. 10	11	12	13	14 \$ PR 7:30 PM	15 PR 7:30 PM	16 PR 7:30 PM
17 2 PM PR/OC	18 ON 7:30 PM	19	20 IC 7:30 PM	21 NG 7:30 PM	22 TT 7:30 PM	23 2 PM 7:30 PM
24 2 PM 7:30 PM	25	26 7:30 PM	27 OC 2PM 7:30 PM	28 7:30 PM	29 7:30 PM	30 7:30 PM
31 2 PM 7:30 PM	APRIL 1	2	3 7:30 PM	4 7:30 PM	5 7:30 PM	6 2 PM 7:30 PM
7 2 PM 7:30 PM	8	9 SF 7:30 PM	10 2 PM 7:30 PM	11 7:30 PM	12 7:30 PM	13 7:30 PM
14 2 PM CN	15	16	17	18	19	20

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Little Shop of Horrors

Book & lyrics by Howard Ashman • Music by Alan Menken

Directed by Tyler Dobrowsky

April 11 – May 12, 2019 • Chace Theater

A perennially-popular, award-winning musical, *Little Shop of Horrors* blends doo-wop, rock, and Motown into a charming and totally-twisted must-see Trinity Rep event. A strange and unusual plant seems like just the thing to save a beleaguered Skid Row flower shop and its hapless employees, Seymour and Audrey. But when that plant turns out to feed only on blood and is inclined toward world-domination, well... things get a little messy. This deviously-delicious musical will be fun for the whole family.



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14 2 PM PR/OC	15 ON 7:30 PM	16	17 IC 7:30 PM	18 NG 7:30 PM	19 TT 7:30 PM	20 2 PM 7:30 PM
21 2 PM 7:30 PM	22	23 7:30 PM	24 2 PM 7:30 PM	25 7:30 PM	26 7:30 PM	27 2 PM 7:30 PM
28 2 PM 7:30 PM	29	30	MAY 1 OC 2 7:30 PM	2 7:30 PM	3 7:30 PM	4 7:30 PM
5 2 PM 7:30 PM	6	7 SF 7:30 PM	8 7:30 PM	9 7:30 PM	10 7:30 PM	11 SF+ 2PM 7:30 PM
12 2 PM CN	13	14	15	16	17	18

Marisol by José Rivera

Directed by Brian Mertes

May 16 – June 16, 2019 • Dowling Theater

Marisol awakens in her New York City apartment after a visit from her guardian angel to a surreal and crumbling new reality. The Bronx has become a battlefield as leather-clad angels take up arms against an old and dying God in a war to save the universe. The moon has disappeared, food has turned to salt, and chaos follows Marisol at every turn as she attempts to find hope among the ruins in this primal, poetic, fantastical, and often humorous contemporary classic.

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
MAY 12	13	14	15	16 \$ PR 7:30 PM	17 PR 7:30 PM	18 PR 7:30 PM
19 2 PM PR/OC	20 ON 7:30 PM	21	22 IC 7:30 PM	23 NG 7:30 PM	24 TT 7:30 PM	25 2 PM 7:30 PM
26 2 PM 7:30 PM	27	28 7:30 PM	29 OC 2PM 7:30 PM	30 7:30 PM	31 7:30 PM	JUNE 1 7:30 PM
2 2 PM 7:30 PM	3	4	5 7:30 PM	6 7:30 PM	7 7:30 PM	8 7:30 PM
9 2 PM 7:30 PM	10	11 SF 7:30 PM	12 2 PM 7:30 PM	13 7:30 PM	14 7:30 PM	15 2 PM 7:30 PM
16 2 PM CN	17	18	19	20	21	22



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