



GUTHRIE
THEATER

2023 2024 SEASON

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For more information, contact:

Elizabeth Deacon

press@guthrietheater.org

612.225.6193

GUTHRIE THEATER ANNOUNCES 2023–2024 SEASON

In a robust 10-production season of cherished classics and acclaimed new work, highlights include a world premiere by Native voices, Shakespeare’s History Cycle in rotating repertory and a frightfully entertaining musical comedy

(*Minneapolis/St. Paul*) — The Guthrie Theater (Joseph Haj, Artistic Director) today announced a robust 10-production lineup of cherished classics and insightful new work for its 2023–2024 Season: Oscar Wilde’s perfectly crafted comedy *The Importance of Being Earnest*; the world premiere of Ty Defoe and Larissa FastHorse’s *For the People*, which was commissioned by the Guthrie; the theater’s 49th production of *A Christmas Carol*; Yasmina Reza’s internationally acclaimed ‘*Art*’; Frederick Knott’s plot-twisting thriller *Dial M for Murder*, adapted by Jeffrey

Hatcher; Bill Irwin's celebrated one-man show *On Beckett; A Brittle Glory*, William Shakespeare's three-part History Cycle of *Richard II*, *Henry IV* and *Henry V* performed in repertory; Dominique Morisseau's critically acclaimed drama *Skeleton Crew*; Howard Ashman and Alan Menken's fan favorite *Little Shop of Horrors*; and Sanaz Toossi's perceptive new play *English*.

New season subscriptions go on sale May 9, 2023. To purchase a package, call the Season Ticket Office at 612.225.6238 or 1.877.997.3276 (toll-free) or visit www.guthrietheater.org/subscribe.

Artistic Director Joseph Haj remarked, "I continue to believe in the power of theater to entertain, challenge and inspire us, and I look forward to stepping into the vibrant worlds of these plays with our audiences. Our thrilling new lineup offers something for everyone, from feel-good comedies to cleverly crafted thrillers to sweeping historical sagas."

He added, "It is also a thrill to announce that we will move forward in presenting Shakespeare's history plays in rotating repertory — an ambitious project that was necessarily delayed due to the pandemic. These dramas of epic scope are rarely produced together, and we expect this to be a powerful, galvanizing event for artists, audiences and our community."

The season begins with Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, directed by David Ivers and playing September 9 – October 15, 2023, on the Wurtele Thrust Stage. The play revolves around Jack Worthing and Algernon Moncrieff — two dapper Victorian gents who shamelessly invent people to shirk responsibility and follow their whims. For country-dwelling Jack, his fictitious brother Ernest creates a perfect excuse to visit London and swoon over Gwendolen, Algernon's cousin and daughter of the formidable Lady Bracknell. For city-dwelling Algernon, his imaginary (and sickly) friend Bunbury frequently calls him away to the country, where he meets and falls for Jack's ward Cecily. Like a brilliantly paced piece of music, this masterful comedy woos the audience into a state of sheer delight with its mild treacheries, hilarious confusions and endearingly flawed characters.

One of the most perfect comedies ever written, Wilde's masterpiece continues to entertain with its keen depiction of Victorian conventional manners and its satirical-yet-playful treatment of upper-class notions of propriety.

From October 7 – November 12, 2023, the Guthrie will produce the world premiere of *For the People* by Ty Defoe (Oneida and Ojibwe Nations) and Larissa FastHorse (Sicangu Lakota), directed by Michael John Garcés on the McGuire Proscenium Stage. Commissioned by the Guthrie with funding from The Joyce Foundation, *For the People* is grounded in Minneapolis' Native community and draws on its rich Dakota and Ojibwe heritage. The play centers on April Dakota, a 20-something who faces fierce competition for grant funding to realize her dream of serving the Indigenous community through a wellness center on Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis.

With humor and heart, Defoe and FastHorse examine the myriad facets that make up contemporary Native life.

In summer 2017, the Guthrie collaborated with Defoe and FastHorse to produce *Water Is Sacred* — a performance that blended ceremony, music, text, dance and discussion to celebrate water and acknowledge how water has been threatened on Indigenous lands. Building on that work, the three-part project *Stories From the Drum* launched in September 2018 and culminated in performances in summer 2019 that were created from Native-led workshops.

Together, Defoe and FastHorse lead Indigenous Direction, a consulting firm to guide creators of work about, for and with Indigenous people. Defoe wrote the book and lyrics for *Clouds Are Pillows for the Moon*, *In the Cards* and *Tick, Tick* and co-wrote *Ajijaak on Turtle Island*. FastHorse's plays include *Native Nation*, *The Thanksgiving Play*, *What Would Crazy Horse Do?* and *Urban Rez*.

Continuing the theater's beloved holiday tradition, the Guthrie will present its 49th production of Charles Dickens' ***A Christmas Carol***, November 11 – December 28, 2023, on the Wurtele Thrust Stage. The adaptation by Lavina Jadhvani will be directed by Guthrie Associate Producer Addie Gorlin-Han, based on the original direction by Joseph Haj.

The Guthrie will then produce Yasmina's Reza's '***Art***', translated by Christopher Hampton. Under the direction of Lisa Portes, performances will run December 16, 2023 – January 28, 2024, on the McGuire Proscenium Stage. In this dark comedy, Serge begins his foray into contemporary art collecting with a big purchase: an unframed white canvas with barely-there white diagonal lines. When his close friend Marc regards the painting with ridicule, Serge is deeply insulted. The two men separately vent to their mutual confidant Yvan, who sees both sides of their seemingly trivial disagreement but wants to keep the peace. When the three friends meet for a night out, the dispute escalates into an all-out interrogation of why they're even friends in the first place.

Brimming with intense and funny dialogue, this incisive satire circles existential questions and regularly breaks the fourth wall to include the audience in the onstage musings. '*Art*' has been produced in 45 countries and translated into over 30 languages. It received the 1997 Olivier Award for Best New Comedy and Tony Award for Best Play, among numerous other accolades. Reza's works also include *Conversations After a Burial*, *The Passage of Winter* and *God of Carnage*, which the Guthrie produced in 2011.

Next on the Wurtele Thrust Stage is Frederick Knott's plot-twisting thriller ***Dial M for Murder***, adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher. Directed by Guthrie Senior Artistic Producer Tracy Brigden, performances run January 20 – February 25, 2024. Originally produced as a BBC TV production, then a stage play and finally a film directed by Alfred Hitchcock, *Dial M for Murder* is a minutely crafted work in which the audience sees the story wind up and then watches it unspool.

While in London promoting her new murder mystery, Maxine drops in on her former lover Margot who shares some distressing news: She's being blackmailed for a love letter from Maxine that went missing after their affair ended. Margot thinks her husband Tony is none the wiser, but he knows everything — and then some.

Hatcher's fast-paced adaptation changes a character's gender (Mark becomes Maxine) and Tony's profession (from tennis player to public relations) to create additional layers, including queering the extramarital affair. The play explores thrillers themselves — as characters brainstorm ways to commit murder, the attempted murder occurs as Maxine speaks on the radio about what makes a great thriller and Tony pivots with aplomb to stay one step ahead.

Hatcher's work has been onstage at the Guthrie numerous times, including *The Falls*; adaptations of *The Critic*, *The Government Inspector* and *To Fool the Eye*; the book for *Ella*; and additional material for *The Pirates of Penzance*, among others.

The Guthrie will then present the Irish Repertory Theatre production of ***On Beckett***, produced by Octopus Theatricals. Based on the writings of Irish playwright Samuel Beckett and conceived, performed and directed by Tony Award-winning actor and master clown Bill Irwin, *On Beckett* will play February 17 – March 24, 2024, on the McGuire Proscenium Stage.

Irwin has spent a lifetime captivated by Beckett and his works. The depth of his devotion for the famed Irish writer plays out onstage in a nonstop display of jovial verbal and physical comedy that has become his signature. With little more than a microphone and a podium, Irwin lets the audience in on the creative process of engaging with Beckett's sometimes opaque but undeniably rich language, providing a primer in clowning along the way.

On Beckett features text from *Texts for Nothing*, *The Unnamable*, *Watt* and *Waiting for Godot*. The Guthrie has produced Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame* and most recently *Happy Days*. This marks Irwin's first appearance at the Guthrie.

In an epic three-part theatrical event, the Guthrie will produce ***A Brittle Glory***, William Shakespeare's History Cycle (***Richard II***, ***Henry IV*** [Parts I and II as one play] and ***Henry V***) in rotating repertory, directed by Joseph Haj. Performed by a company of 25 actors on the Guthrie's Wurtele Thrust Stage, this ambitious three-play series will run March 23 – May 25, 2024, and is made possible by The Roy Cockrum Foundation.

Heavy is the head that wears the crown. So the history goes in Shakespeare's three dramas encompassing the life and times of key players in the tumultuous English monarchy from 1398 to 1420: *Richard II*, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*. Known as the History Cycle or Henriad, this dramatic feat will immerse audiences in Shakespeare's examination of power, those who seek it and those who are destroyed by the power they crave. Due to the sizeable nature of these plays, they are

infrequently produced at this scale, making the Guthrie's run a rare and exciting theatrical experience.

A Brittle Glory was previously announced as part of the Guthrie's 2020–2021 Season and later canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Guthrie last produced plays in rotating repertory in summer 1998, with *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *A Month in the Country*.

Next on the McGuire Proscenium Stage will be Dominique Morisseau's critically acclaimed drama ***Skeleton Crew***, directed by Austene Van and playing May 4 – June 9, 2024. As the Great Recession of 2008 begins to decimate industries across America, the once-gleaming "Motor City" has lost its luster. At one of its still-standing auto factories, four colleagues-turned-friends hear rumors that their plant is facing foreclosure. Faye, Dez, Shanita and Reggie all have different stakes in the company should it go under, which they grapple with in the break room as the fear of losing their jobs looms. In the final chapter of Morisseau's acclaimed Detroit trilogy, *Skeleton Crew* wrestles with questions of grief, loyalty and self-preservation while exploring the monumental impact of the Recession-era economy on middle-class life.

Born and raised in Detroit, Michigan, Morisseau received the Spirit of Detroit Award for her work and writing, which often centers around the individual lives of people in communities facing economic and social changes. Her plays *Detroit '67* (Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama) and *Paradise Blue* complete The Detroit Project trilogy. Morisseau's other plays include *Sunset Baby*, *Blood at the Root*, *Pipeline* and *Ain't Too Proud*. She is the recipient of a Steinberg Playwright Award, two NAACP Image Awards, an Obie Award and a MacArthur Genius Grant Fellowship.

Skeleton Crew premiered at New York City's Atlantic Theater Company, and in 2022, the play opened on Broadway where it received a Tony Award nomination for Best Play. This is the first work by Morisseau to be produced by the Guthrie.

Summer at the Guthrie will feature the frightfully funny musical ***Little Shop of Horrors***. With a book and lyrics by Howard Ashman and music by Alan Menken, based on the film by Roger Corman with a screenplay by Charles Griffith, the production will play June 22 – August 18, 2024, on the Wurtele Thrust Stage. A hilarious mashup of science fiction, horror and musical theater, this cult classic about a blood-thirsty plant in a Skid Row florist shop boasts Motown-inspired hits like "Feed Me (Git It)," "Suddenly, Seymour" and "Little Shop of Horrors."

Little Shop of Horrors originated as a film by Corman in 1960 and was adapted by Ashman and Menken in 1982 for an Off-Off-Broadway production. The musical then played Off-Broadway for five years and had a Broadway run in 2003–2004. A film adaptation of the musical featuring Rick Moranis, Steve Martin and Ellen Greene premiered in 1986.

Ashman and Menken are best known for their work on Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Aladdin*. Menken has also written music for *Sister Act*, *Newsies*, *Leap of Faith* and *A Bronx Tale* onstage (in addition to the stage versions of his films) and for the Disney films

Pocahontas, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Hercules, Enchanted, Tangled and Disenchanted.

The Guthrie will close the season with Sanaz Toossi's ***English***, a beautifully crafted comedy that explores the realities of the language-learning process and the parts of our identities that are lost and found along the way. Performances will run July 13 – August 18, 2024, on the McGuire Proscenium Stage.

Set in Karaj, Iran, educator Marjan perfected her English during a nine-year stint in Britain and strictly maintains an English-only method to ensure her four students pass the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) with flying colors. Everyone has varying motivations, accents and enthusiasm as they pursue fluency together — Marjan included, who feels her own proficiency slipping. After six weeks of trial, error and effort, what they discover about themselves may be the greatest learning curve of all.

English premiered in March 2022 at Atlantic Theater Company in a co-production with Roundabout Theatre Company and received the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Play, an Obie Award for Best New Play, the John Gassner Playwriting Award from the Outer Critics Circle and a Drama Desk Award nomination for Outstanding Play. Toossi is also the recipient of a 2020 Steinberg Playwright Award. For *English*, she received the 2020 Weissberger New Play Award from Williamstown Theatre Festival and 2021 Laurents/Hatcher Foundation Award for early career playwrights. This is the first play by Toossi to be produced by the Guthrie.

The Guthrie Theater's 2023–2024 Season sponsors include the Minnesota State Arts Board, The Roy Cockrum Foundation, The Shubert Foundation and U.S. Bank.

Ticket Information

Nine productions will be available as part of the 2023–2024 subscription series: *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Dial M for Murder*, *A Brittle Glory (Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V)* and *Little Shop of Horrors* on the Wurtele Thrust Stage and *For the People*, *'Art'*, *On Beckett*, *Skeleton Crew* and *English* on the McGuire Proscenium Stage.

New season subscriptions start at \$68 and go on sale May 9, 2023. Single tickets for *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *For the People* and *'Art'* go on sale July 13, 2023. Single tickets for *A Christmas Carol* go on sale September 5, 2023. Single tickets for *Dial M for Murder*, *On Beckett*, *A Brittle Glory (Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V)* and *Skeleton Crew* go on sale November 9, 2023. Single tickets for *Little Shop of Horrors* and *English* go on sale January 11, 2024. Single ticket prices for all mainstage shows, excluding *A Christmas Carol*, range from \$29 to \$95. Tickets for *A Christmas Carol* range from \$29 to \$134. Discounts are available for students, educators, seniors and children.

To purchase a season subscription, call the Season Ticket Office at 612.225.6238 or 1.877.997.3276 (toll-free) or visit www.guthrietheater.org/subscribe.

Land Acknowledgment

The Guthrie Theater acknowledges that it resides on the traditional land of the Dakota People and honors with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations, including the Ojibwe and other Indigenous nations.

The **GUTHRIE THEATER** (Joseph Haj, Artistic Director) is an American center for theater performance in Minneapolis, Minnesota, celebrating 60 years of artistic excellence during its 2022–2023 Season. Under Haj’s leadership, the Guthrie has continued its dedication to producing a mix of classic and contemporary plays and cultivating the next generation of theater artists. Since its founding in 1963, the theater has set a national standard for excellence in the field and served the people of Minnesota as a vital cultural resource. The Guthrie houses three state-of-the-art stages, production facilities, classrooms, restaurants and dramatic public spaces.
guthrietheater.org.

GUTHRIE THEATER 2023–2024 SEASON

The Importance of Being Earnest

by OSCAR WILDE

directed by DAVID IVERS

September 9 – October 15, 2023

Wurtele Thrust Stage

For the People

by TY DEFOE and LARISSA FASTHORSE

directed by MICHAEL JOHN GARCÉS

October 7 – November 12, 2023

McGuire Proscenium Stage

A Christmas Carol

by CHARLES DICKENS

adapted by LAVINA JADHWANI

directed by ADDIE GORLIN-HAN

based on the original direction by JOSEPH HAJ

November 11 – December 28, 2023

Wurtele Thrust Stage

‘Art’

by YASMINA REZA

translated by CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON

directed by LISA PORTES

December 16, 2023 – January 28, 2024

McGuire Proscenium Stage

Dial M for Murder

written by FREDERICK KNOTT

adapted by JEFFREY HATCHER

directed by TRACY BRIGDEN

January 20 – February 25, 2024

Wurtele Thrust Stage

The Guthrie Theater presents an Irish Repertory Theatre production produced by Octopus
Theatricals

On Beckett

based on the writings of SAMUEL BECKETT

conceived, performed and directed by BILL IRWIN

February 17 – March 24, 2024

McGuire Proscenium Stage

A Brittle Glory

Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V

by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

directed by JOSEPH HAJ

March 23 – May 25, 2024

Wurtele Thrust Stage

Skeleton Crew

by DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU

directed by AUSTENE VAN

May 4 – June 9, 2024

McGuire Proscenium Stage

Little Shop of Horrors

book and lyrics by HOWARD ASHMAN

music by ALAN MENKEN

based on the film by ROGER CORMAN, screenplay by CHARLES GRIFFITH

directed by TBA

June 22 – August 18, 2024

Wurtele Thrust Stage

English

by SANAZ TOOSSI

directed by TBA

July 13 – August 18, 2024
McGuire Proscenium Stage

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Guthrie Theater
818 South 2nd Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

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Guthrie Theater Est. 1963

Box Office Hours

Monday: Closed

Tuesday – Sunday: 1–8 p.m. (opens at 10 a.m. for matinees)

On days with no performances or matinees only, the Box Office closes at 6 p.m.

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