

ALLEY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 31, 2022

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Alley Theatre Announces Its 2022-23 season

The Season Features Five World Premiere Plays and One World Premiere Musical

HOUSTON, TX – The Tony Award®-winning Alley Theatre and Artistic Director Rob Melrose announces the 2022-23 season which includes six world premieres including three world premiere plays, two world premiere adaptations, and one world premiere musical. The 76th season also marks the return of the beloved Summer Chills series, after a three-year hiatus due to COVID-19.

“I’m so excited to announce our 76th Season. It is our first full season, including Summer Chills, since we closed for COVID-19 in 2020. It really feels like we are BACK!” says **Artistic Director Rob Melrose**. “This season is bold and adventurous, featuring six world premieres, including new plays by Isaac Gómez, Monet Hurst-Mendoza, Ken Ludwig, and a new musical created by Molly Beach Murphy, Jeanna Philips, and Annie Tippe. The classics are also solidly represented with new adaptations of *A Christmas Carol*, the hilarious commedia dell’arte classic *The Servant of Two Masters*, Nobel-Prize winning author Derek Walcott’s adaptation of Homer’s epic *The Odyssey*, and the American classic Edward Albee’s *Seascape*, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1975.”

“Edward Albee was in residence at the Alley for over a decade. It has been twenty years since we have produced one of his plays,” Melrose continues. “The Alley has never done *Seascape*, arguably his second most famous play after *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* I’m excited for the Alley to celebrate the important part it had in this great American playwright’s career. There are also lots of thrills and chills between our summer production of *Clue* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily* later in the spring.”

The Alley Theatre’s 76th Season will launch with the return of Summer Chills with the madcap comedy ***Clue***, with screenplay by Jonathan Lynn, written by **Sandy Rustin** with additional material by **Hunter Foster** and **Eric Price**. *Clue* is based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture and the Hasbro board game, this production runs **July 22 – August 28, 2022** in the Hubbard Theatre and is directed by Alley’s Associate Producer & Casting Director **Brandon Weinbrenner**.

Next, is the world premiere comedy ***Lend Me A Soprano*** by Tony Award®-winner **Ken Ludwig** (*The Three Musketeers*, *Murder on the Orient Express*), which runs **September 16 – October 9, 2022** in the Hubbard Theatre. This is based on Ludwig’s *Lend Me a Tenor* is directed by **Eleanor Holdridge**.

Seascape by Alley favorite **Edward Albee** runs **October 14 – November 13, 2022** in the Neuhaus Theatre. The Pulitzer Prize-winning play is directed by **Nathan Winkelstein**.

The world premiere of new musical ***Cowboy Bob***, created by Molly Beach Murphy, Jeanna Phillips & Annie Tippe, will grace the Alley’s Hubbard Theatre. *Cowboy Bob* is directed by **Annie Tippe** with music and lyrics by **Jeanna Phillips**, book and additional lyrics by **Molly Beach Murphy**, additional musical by

Alex Thraikill and runs **March 3 – 26, 2023**. *Cowboy Bob* is produced by special arrangement with **Sally Cade Holmes**, and **David Denson (Red Tail Entertainment)**.

Based on the story by Homer, *The Odyssey* by Nobel Prize-winner **Derek Walcott** is directed by **Christopher Windom (Choosing Love)**. The classic adventure runs **March 24 – April 23, 2023** in the Neuhaus Theatre.

The comedy-mystery *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Jersey Lily* by **Katie Forgette** runs **April 14 – May 7, 2023** in the Hubbard Theatre. Associate Producer & Casting Director **Brandon Weinbrenner** directs.

Next, the world premiere of *Torera* by **Monet Hurst-Mendoza** and directed by **Tatiana Pandiani** runs **May 12 – June 11, 2023**, in the Neuhaus Theatre. The play will be developed in the upcoming 2022 Alley All New Festival.

Closing out the season is Artistic Director **Rob Melrose**'s translation and adaptation of *The Servant of Two Masters* based on Carlo Goldoni's original text. This world premiere adaptation is directed by **Melrose** and runs **June 9 – July 2, 2023** in the Hubbard Theatre.

The Alley's holiday productions include a world premiere adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, adapted from the Dickens novella and directed by Artistic Director **Rob Melrose**. *A Christmas Carol* runs **November 18 – December 30, 2022**. And in the Neuhaus, a world premiere Alley Theatre commission of **Isaac Gómez's (El Chuco Town Forever)** one-woman play *What-a-Christmas!* and directed by **KJ Sanchez (Quixote Nuevo)** runs **December 2 – 24, 2022**.

Alley Transported and the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will tour **January 23 – February 5, 2023** throughout the community. Alley Transported is an "up-close and personal" experience of live professional theatre designed to reach all generations of Houstonians in every one of our neighborhoods. Professional productions of Shakespeare and community-relevant plays will take place in schools, recreation centers, libraries, and other community venues. Alley Transported gives the community an intimate, heartfelt, visceral, and transporting experience of live performance and fosters a shared sense of community.

The **Alley All New Festival** will take place from **June 15 – 25, 2023**. Learn more about the Alley All New initiative at alleytheatre.org/allnew.

The Alley is solidifying the title for the second Hubbard production that runs **January 20 – February 12, 2023**. Once final, the Theatre will share the title, playwright, and director.

2022-23 Season

Madcap Comedy

CLUE

Based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn

Written by Sandy Rustin

Additional Material by Hunter Foster and Eric Price

Based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture

Based on the Hasbro board game CLUE

Original Music by Michael Holland

Directed by Brandon Weinbrenner

July 22 – August 28, 2022 in the Hubbard Theatre

By special arrangement with The Araca Group, Work Light Productions, and Michael Barra/Lively McCabe Entertainment

It's a dark and stormy night, and you've been invited to a dinner party. Murder and blackmail are on the menu when six guests assemble at Boddy Manor for a night they'll never forget... if they make it out alive. Was it Mrs. Peacock in the study with the knife? Or Colonel Mustard in the library with the wrench? Based on the cult movie and the classic board game, *Clue* is the ultimate whodunit that will leave you dying of laughter and keep you guessing until the final twist.

The cast of *Clue* includes Alley's Resident Acting Company members **Elizabeth Bunch** as Mrs. White, **Dylan Godwin** as Wadsworth, **Shawn Hamilton** as The Unexpected Cop/ Chief of Police, **Chris Hutchison** as Mr. Boddy/ The Motorist/ Back Up Cop, **Melissa Molano** as The Cook/ Singing Telegram Girl/ Back Up Cop, **Melissa Pritchett** as Yvette, **David Rainey** as Colonel Mustard, **Christopher Salazar** as Mr. Green, and **Todd Waite** as Professor Plum.

World Premiere Comedy

Ken Ludwig's

LEND ME A SOPRANO

Directed by Eleanor Holdridge

September 16 – October 9, 2022 in the Hubbard Theatre

Ken Ludwig, America's preeminent comic playwright and author of [recent Alley hits](#) *The Three Musketeers* and *Murder on the Orient Express*, debuts his latest play, *Lend Me A Soprano*, to kick off the season. The play is set in 1934, when the clever and combustible Lucille Wiley, Manager of the Cleveland Grand Opera Company, is ready to welcome world-class soprano Elena Firenzi for her one-night-only starring role in *Carmen*. Alas, Elena arrives late, her impassioned husband Pasquale has a fit of jealousy, and it remains to be seen whether Mrs. Wiley's mousy but determined assistant Jo can save the day. Based on Ludwig's Tony Award-winning *Lend Me A Tenor*, the roles are reversed and the ladies take the lead in this madcap screwball comedy guaranteed to leave audiences teary-eyed with laughter.

Pulitzer Prize-Winning Play

Edward Albee's

SEASCAPE

Directed by Nathan Winkelstein

October 14 – November 13, 2022 in the Neuhaus Theatre

From major American playwright and Alley favorite Edward Albee comes a Pulitzer Prize-winning play that tackles two of the playwright's favorite subjects: marriage and what it means to be human. With his signature wit, Albee introduces a middle-aged couple, Nancy and Charlie, taking a stroll on a deserted beach. Facing retirement, they argue with comfortable familiarity about how to spend the rest of their lives. When a second couple, Sea Creatures Sarah and Leslie, arrives from the depths of the ocean, a pitched encounter, both surreal and profound, ensues. It seems that Sarah and Leslie are also at a turning point in their lives and they are also like no other couple Nancy and Charlie have ever met. A tender and often laugh-out-loud love story, told by way of an unusual marriage counseling session.

World Premiere Adaptation

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Charles Dickens

Adapted and Directed by Rob Melrose

November 18 – December 30, 2022 in the Hubbard Theatre

Inspired by the original novella, Melrose captures Dickens' witty wording and evocative style to surprise audiences with parts of the familiar story they didn't know were there! With rich Victorian costumes, exciting magical elements created by acclaimed magician Jim Steinmeyer, and beautifully sung holiday

carols, *A Christmas Carol* tells the beloved story of Scrooge and his miraculous transformation. This new production of a holiday tradition is the perfect way for families to recapture the nostalgia of Christmases past and to create memories for many Christmases to come.

The cast of *A Christmas Carol* includes Alley's Resident Acting Company members **Elizabeth Bunch** as Ghost of Christmas Past, **Dylan Godwin** as Bob Cratchit, **Shawn Hamilton** as Ghost of Christmas Present, **Chris Hutchison** as Jacob Marley, **Melissa Molano** as Belle, **Melissa Pritchett** as Mrs. Cratchit, **David Rainey** as Ebenezer Scrooge, **Christopher Salazar** as Fred, and **Todd Waite** as Mr. Fezziwig.

World Premiere One-Woman Play

WHAT-A-CHRISTMAS!

By Isaac Gómez

Directed by KJ Sanchez

December 2 – December 24, 2022 in the Neuhaus Theatre

Alley Theatre Commission

Meet Margot, a 30-something Tejana who works at a beloved whata-sized Texas burger joint. The Christmas Eve overnight shift is her personal tradition — even if that means spending the holiday dealing with grumpy drive-thru customers and an equally grumpy robotic Santa. But when her dead best friend Jackie Marley drops by to warn her of impending late-night visits by spirits, Margot has no choice but to roll with the punches and confront the very Scrooge she's become. It's a Christmas Eve like none other in this brand-new holiday show filled with humor and heart set right here in Htown by Texan playwright Isaac Gómez.

TO BE ANNOUNCED

January 20 – February 12, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre

World Premiere Musical

COWBOY BOB

Created by Molly Beach Murphy, Jeanna Phillips & Annie Tippe

Music & Lyrics by Jeanna Phillips

Book & Additional Lyrics by Molly Beach Murphy

Additional Music by Alex Thrailkill

Directed by Annie Tippe

By special arrangement with Sally Cade Holmes and David Denson (Red Tail Entertainment)

March 3 – 26, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre

You wouldn't look twice at Peggy Jo. She's a good daughter, always tips, plays by the rules - but when she dons a fake beard, sunglasses, and ten-gallon hat, she becomes "Cowboy Bob"- the slickest bank robber Texas has ever known. And she may just be the life-affirming inspiration one waitress in a Dallas Chili's badly needs to buck routine and take control of her own life. Equal parts Riot Grrrl rage and Texas twang, this world-premiere musical loosely based on actual events - and co-authored by Galveston's own Molly Beach Murphy - invites audiences to join the heist, take life by the reins, and let it ride.

Adventure Classic

THE ODYSSEY

By Derek Walcott

Directed by Christopher Windom

March 24 – April 23, 2023 in the Neuhaus Theatre

With rich Caribbean tones of his island home, Derek Walcott (winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature) adapts the ancient story of Odysseus, the soldier-king who spends 10 adventurous years making his way home from the Trojan War. Interspersing the story with a commentary by the blind singer Billy Blue adds richness and a musical lilt to the classic tale. While Odysseus' loving wife Penelope stays chaste in Ithaca, fending off suitors ready to take the throne, Odysseus and his crew face shipwrecks, wrathful gods, sirens, monsters, incarceration, mermaids, a side trip to hell, and absolutely foul weather.

The cast of *The Odyssey* includes Alley's Resident Acting Company members **Dylan Godwin, Shawn Hamilton, Chris Hutchison, Melissa Molano, Melissa Pritchett,** and **David Rainey.**

A Comedy-Mystery

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE CASE OF THE JERSEY LILY

By Katie Forgette

Directed by Brandon Weinbrenner

April 14 – May 7, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre

The wit of Oscar Wilde meets the cunning of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In this comic twist on a classic sleuthing caper, Wilde's muse, actress Lillie Langtry (a.k.a the Jersey Lily) presents Holmes with what seems like an open and shut case. But with his superior powers of deductive reasoning, Sherlock wastes no time in exposing a much more sinister conspiracy. Meanwhile, Oscar Wilde is in the throes of writing his acclaimed *The Importance of Being Earnest* and Holmes might inspire some of the play. In a fast-paced ride full of surprises and disguises, Holmes and Watson must do whatever it takes to help their friends...while facing their greatest foe.

The cast includes Alley's Resident Acting Company members **Elizabeth Bunch** as Mrs. Irma Tory/ Mrs. McGlynn, **Christopher Salazar** as Oscar Wilde, and **Todd Waite** as Sherlock Holmes.

World Premiere Play

TORERA

By Monet Hurst-Mendoza

Directed by Tatiana Pandiani

May 12 – June 11, 2023 in the Neuhaus Theatre

Bullfighting in Yucatán, Mexico is a world nearly exclusive to men—yet for Elena Ramírez, it is her life's ambition. With the help of her best friend, a matador's son, Elena begins secretly training to compete with the greatest. But when she discovers that her seemingly inherent talent can beat even the most accomplished toreros, this young woman must choose between accepting society's limits or breaking boundaries. A world premiere play written by a stunning new voice in the American theatre, *Torera* tells a poignant story about becoming your truest self by proudly stepping into the ring. The play will be developed in the 2022 Alley All New Festival.

World Premiere Adaptation

THE SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS

Translated, Adapted, and Directed by Rob Melrose

From the original play in Italian by Carlo Goldoni

June 9 – July 2, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre

Identities are mistaken, engagements are broken, and lovers are reunited in this world premiere adaptation of Carlo Goldoni's commedia dell'arte masterpiece. Set in Venice, mayhem erupts when the wily—and chronically hungry—servant Truffaldino hatches a zany scheme to double his wages (and his meals) by serving two masters at once. Directed by Rob Melrose, this physical comedy classic will have you laughing at and loving our hapless hero.

The cast of *The Servant of Two Masters* includes Alley's Resident Acting Company members **Elizabeth Bunch** as Beatrice, **Dylan Godwin** as Silvio, **Shawn Hamilton** as Pulchinella/ Waiter, **Chris Hutchison** as Brighella, **Melissa Molano** as Clarice, **Melissa Pritchett** as Smerildina, **David Rainey** as Pantalone, **Christopher Salazar** as Truffaldino, and **Todd Waite** as Dr. Lombardi.

Alley Transported

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Rob Melrose

January 23 – February 5, 2023 throughout the Houston community

Taking place on a 15 by 15 foot playing area with many of the Alley Resident Actors, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a feast for the eyes, heart, and funny bone. Viewers are led from an elegant but earthbound palace into a magical forest where some of the inhabitants may not be bound by anything at all. It's a world where even the fools are enchanting. The audience is a part of the wacky action in this abridged version of Shakespeare's text.

The cast of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* includes Alley's Resident Acting Company members **Elizabeth Bunch** as Titania/ Hippolyta, **Dylan Godwin** as Demetrius/ Snug/ Cobweb, **Chris Hutchison** as Ageus/ Peter Quince, **Melissa Molano** as Hermia/ Robin Starveling/ Fairy/ Peaseblossom, **David Rainey** as Oberon/ Theseus, and **Christopher Salazar** as Bottom.

Full casting and creative teams for all productions will be announced at a later date.

PHOTOS: [Click here.](#)

ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE:

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley is committed to developing and producing theatre that is as diverse as the Houston community. The Theatre produces up to 16 plays and nearly 500 performances each season, ranging from the best current work and re-invigorated classic plays to new plays by contemporary writers. Home to a full-time resident company of actors, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline—actors, directors, designers, composers, playwrights—who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

The Alley is comprised of two state-of-the-art theatres: the 774-seat Hubbard Theatre and the 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre. The Alley reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance, education, and community engagement programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show and post-performance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages.

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