Alley Theatre Announces Its 2023-24 Season
The Season Features Classic Works, World Premiere Plays, One World Premiere Musical and Lots of Laughter

HOUSTON, TX – Tony Award®-winning Alley Theatre and Artistic Director Rob Melrose announces the 2023-24 season which includes classic works, world premiere plays, one world premiere musical, a murder mystery, and lots of laughter.

“Our 2023-2024 is designed to welcome people to the theatre,” shares Alley Theatre Artistic Director Rob Melrose. “We are offering a wide variety of plays: comedies, family dramas, musicals, and more. There is something for everyone but if you see them all then you won’t risk missing the play that changes your life! All in all, we have five world premieres as well as classic works from authors such as Anton Chekhov, Thornton Wilder, Charlotte Brontë, Agatha Christie, and Charles Dickens.”

“It’s time to get back to the theatre! So many of us have gotten in the habit of settling for whatever is streaming from our couch, but we are missing out on the human interactions, the community, the comradery, the laughing and breathing together that you only get in a theatre with other people. We hope you join us for the season, but most of all, we hope you subscribe and become part of the Alley family. I hope to see you next season!”

Alley Theatre’s 77th Season will launch with the Summer Chills production of Agatha Christie’s The Murder of Roger Ackroyd, adapted for the stage by Mark Shanahan and directed by Mark Shanahan. Agatha Christie’s The Murder of Roger Ackroyd runs July 21 – August 27, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre.

Next, is the heartwarming play American Mariachi by José Cruz González, which runs September 22 – October 22, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre. Infused with mariachi music, American Mariachi is directed by KJ Sanchez (Quixote Nuevo).

Little Comedies, a collection of one-act comedies by Anton Chekhov, translated by Tony Award® winner Richard Nelson, Richard Pevear, and Larissa Volokhonsky, runs October 6 – October 29, 2023 in the Neuhaus Theatre. This Alley Theatre Commission is directed by Richard Nelson.

Based on the photo memoir of the same name by Larry Sultan, Pictures from Home by Sharr White, and directed by Alley Theatre Artistic Director Rob Melrose, and runs from January 19 – February 11, 2024 in the Hubbard Theatre.

The side-splitting comedy, The Nerd, will grace Alley’s Hubbard Theatre. Written by Larry Shue and directed by Associate Producer & Casting Director Brandon Weinhrenner, The Nerd runs February 23 – March 17, 2024.

Part of the Alley All New Festival in 2022, The World is Not Silent by Don X. Nguyen is directed by Marya Mazor. This moving story runs March 22 – April 14, 2024 in the Neuhaus Theatre.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

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Adapted by Elizabeth Williamson from the beloved classic novel by Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre runs April 12 – May 5, 2024 in the Hubbard Theatre. Eleanor Holdridge (Ken Ludwig’s Lend Me A Soprano) directs.

Next, the world premiere of Thornton Wilder’s The Emporium, completed by Kirk Lynn and directed by Alley Artistic Director Rob Melrose runs May 10 – June 2, 2024, in the Neuhaus Theatre. The play was part of the 2022 Alley All New Festival.

Closing out the season is Ella featuring music from the Ella Fitzgerald songbook. This world premiere musical by Anna Deavere Smith is directed by Philip Wm. McKinley and runs May 31 – June 23, 2024 in the Hubbard Theatre. Ella is produced by special arrangement with Steve J. Scarduzio.

Anna Deavere Smith said, “Composers wanted Ella Fitzgerald to sing their songs because listening to her, they knew how their songs were supposed to be sung. A jazz singer, a scat singer, she also famously both sang and defined the American song book. To say she had humble beginnings is a profound understatement. She sang America through some of its most discordant times. She was America’s love song. She was an American miracle.”

The Alley’s holiday production includes the hit new adaptation of A Christmas Carol, adapted from the Dickens novella and directed by Artistic Director Rob Melrose. A Christmas Carol runs November 16 – December 30, 2023.

2023-24 Season

Summer Chills
Agatha Christie’s
THE MURDER OF ROGER ACKROYD
Adapted for the stage by Mark Shanahan
Directed by Mark Shanahan

World Premiere
July 21 – August 27, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre

One of Agatha Christie’s best-known novels and voted the best crime novel ever by the British Crime Writers’ Association is turned into this murderous mystery for the stage. This twisty whodunit features extraordinary characters who hold secrets about blackmail and murder that only the detective Hercule Poirot can solve in the all-new adaptation.

The cast of Agatha Christie’s The Murder of Roger Ackroyd includes Alley Theatre’s Resident Acting Company members Elizabeth Bunch as Caroline Sheppard, Dylan Godwin as Ralph Paton, Shawn Hamilton as Roger Ackroyd, Chris Hutchison as Major Hector Blunt, Melissa Molano as Flora Ackroyd, Melissa Pritchett as Miss Helen Russell, David Rainey as Inspector Raglan, Christopher Salazar as Dr. James Sheppard, and Todd Waite as Parker. The Resident Acting Company will be joined by Susan Koozin as Gertrude Ackroyd and David Sinaiko as Hercule Poirot.
The power of music to celebrate, honor, and heal

AMERICAN MARIACHI
By José Cruz González
Directed by KJ Sanchez
September 22 – October 22, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre

Family, love, and tradition are at the core of this heartwarming play about the freedom to dream big. It’s the 1970’s and girls can’t be mariachis … or can they? As Lucha and her spunky cousin hunt for bandmates, dodge disapproving relatives, and bring Mom along for the ride. This play is infused with vibrant, infectious live mariachi music and reminds us how music and love can make the impossible come true.

LITTLE COMEDIES
by Anton Chekhov
Translated by Richard Nelson, Richard Pevear, and Larissa Volokhonsky
Directed by Richard Nelson
Alley Theatre Commission and World Premiere
October 6 – October 29, 2023 in the Neuhaus Theatre

What do *Swan Song*, *The Bear*, *The Proposal*, *The Wedding*, and *The Harmfulness of Tobacco* have in common? They are all one-act comedies written by Anton Chekhov that will be performed by the Alley’s Resident Acting Company and directed by the Tony-Award® winning playwright and legendary director Richard Nelson. Acclaimed Russian literature translators Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky collaborated with Nelson and have put together a new English translation which will make for an extraordinary evening in the theatre.

The cast of *Little Comedies* includes Alley’s Resident Acting Company members as listed: *The Bear* will include **Melissa Molano**, **Christopher Salazar**, and **Todd Waite**. *The Proposal* will include **Elizabeth Bunch**, **Chris Hutchinson** and **David Rainey**. *The Wedding* will include **Elizabeth Bunch**, **Dylan Godwin**, **Shawn Hamilton**, **Chris Hutchison**, **Melissa Molano**, **Melissa Pritchett**, **David Rainey**, **Christopher Salazar**, and **Todd Waite**. *The Harmfulness of Tobacco* will include **David Rainey**. *Swan Song* will include **Melissa Pritchett** and **Todd Waite**.

Holiday Classic

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
From the novella by Charles Dickens
Adapted and Directed by Rob Melrose
November 16 – December 30, 2023 in the Hubbard Theatre

The Alley’s hit new adaptation with colorful Victorian costumes, special effects, exciting magic, lively dancing, stunning sets, and just the right blend of Christmas Carols. It is a dazzling Christmas feast with the beloved story of Ebeneezer Scrooge and his miraculous transformation.

The cast of *A Christmas Carol* includes Alley’s Resident Acting Company members **Elizabeth Bunch** as The Ghost of Christmas Past, **Dylan Godwin** as Bob Cratchit, **Shawn Hamilton** as The Ghost of Christmas Present, **Chris Hutchison** as Jacob Marley, **Melissa Molano** as Belle, **Melissa Pritchett** as Mrs. Cratchit, **David Rainey** as Ebeneezer Scrooge, **Christopher Salazar** as Fred, and **Todd Waite** as Mr. Fezziwig.
PICTURES FROM HOME
By Sharr White
Directed by Rob Melrose
Based on the Photo Memoir “Pictures from Home” by Larry Sultan
January 19 – February 11, 2024 in the Hubbard Theatre

This heartfelt memory play was part of the 2020 Alley All New Festival and is currently a hit running on Broadway. Set in the late 1980’s, photographer Larry Sultan turns the lens on his parents to ferret out the truths beneath their home movies. This deeply intimate and comic portrait of a mother, a father, and the son explores the question; who gets to depict the family story?

The cast of Pictures from Home includes Alley’s Resident Company member Todd Waite as Irving Sultan.

THE NERD
By Larry Shue
Directed by Brandon Weinbrenner
February 23 – March 17, 2024 in the Hubbard Theatre

An up-and-coming architect invites into his home the hero who saved his life… who also happens to be a total stranger! The visitor is a hopeless ‘nerd’ who outstays his welcome leading to one riotous incident after another. From a time before cell phones, this side-splitting comedy by Larry Shue (The Foreigner) is one of the funniest plays ever written.

The cast of The Nerd includes Alley’s Resident Acting Company members Chris Hutchison as Rick, Shawn Hamilton as Axel, Melissa Molano as Clelia, Melissa Pritchett as Tansy, David Rainey as Wargrave, and Christopher Salazar as Willum.

THE WORLD IS NOT SILENT
By Don X. Nguyen
Directed by Marya Mazor
World Premiere
March 22 – April 14, 2024 in the Neuhaus Theatre

This moving story explores the relationship between a son, Don, and his estranged father as they try and reconnect in the wake of his father’s recent hearing loss. Don learns that the key to communication and connection is speaking from the heart as the play explores how language at the same time divides and unites us. This play was part of Alley All New Festival in 2022.

Classic Novel on Stage
JANE EYRE
By Elizabeth Williamson
Adapted from the novel by Charlotte Brontë
Directed Eleanor Holdridge
April 12 – May 5, 2024 in the Hubbard Theatre

Adapted by Elizabeth Williamson from the beloved classic novel by Charlotte Brontë, this play follows the heroine who struggles for freedom and fulfillment on her own terms. She survives a childhood as an
orphan and confronts poverty, injustice, and the discovery of a bitter betrayal, before taking the ultimate decision to follow her heart.

The cast of *Jane Eyre* includes Alley’s Resident Acting Company Dylan Godwin as Mr Mason/ John Reed/ St John Rivers, Chris Hutchison as Edward Fairfax Rochester, Melissa Molano as Jane Eyre, Melissa Pritchett as Grace Poole/ Mary Ingram/ Bessie, and Todd Waite as John/ Colonel Dent/ Mr Cater/ Priest.

*World premiere of Thornton Wilder’s unfinished full-length play*
Thornton Wilder’s
**THE EMPORIUM**
Completed by Kirk Lynn
Directed by Rob Melrose
May 10 – June 2, 2024 in the Neuhaus Theatre

A young man from an orphanage is adopted by a farmer but runs away to the big city only to discover all this is only a metaphor. Maybe life is really an elaborate job interview to determine if we even qualify for our own existence. This play adapted from Pulitzer Prize-winner Thornton Wilder’s unfinished script was part of Alley All New Festival in 2022.

The cast of Thorton Wilder’s *The Emporium* includes Alley’s Resident Acting Company members
Elizabeth Bunch as Miss Coley, Shawn Hamilton as Mr. Benjamin, David Rainey as Mr. Foster, and Christopher Salazar as John.

*World Premiere Musical*
**ELLA**
by Anna Deavere Smith
Directed by Philip Wm. McKinley
By special arrangement with Steve J. Scarduzio
May 31 – June 23, 2024

Featuring music from the American songbook defined by Ella Fitzgerald, this new musical written by Anna Deavere Smith celebrates the “First Lady of Song” and her rise to household superstar. With unique diction, pure sound, phrasing, and rhythm, her scat-style and improvisations transformed American music. Ella became a beloved singer who set records and broke boundaries by taking life, with all its adversity, and turning it into beautiful songs.

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

SEASON SPONSOR: The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2023-24 Season sponsor United Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre and Hampton Inn and Homewood Suites Downtown Houston, the official hotels of the Alley Theatre.

ABOUT ALLEY THEATRE:

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 Alley produces up to 10 plays and 350 performances each season, ranging from the best current work and classic plays to new plays by contemporary writers. Home to a full-time resident company of actors and expert artisans in all theatre crafts, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline – actors, directors, designers, composers, playwrights – who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

Alley Theatre performs at the Meredith J. Long Theatre Center which 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.