



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Kevin Kearney

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Matthew Nicola

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The Highwood Theatre's 2017-2018 Season

Off Your Rocker: Redefining and Defying the Status Quo

was specifically designed to spotlight plays and musicals that challenge societal conventions and norms

The Highwood Theatre is proud to announce *Off Your Rocker: Redefining and Defying the Status Quo*, the theatre's most ambitious season to date. With seven musicals and six plays, the decision to spotlight shows built around defying norms comes at a time when it is especially important for audiences to consider different ways of thinking.

The selection of shows stems from Highwood's mission of building community through theatre and giving everyone a voice in the theatre they produce, comprising a full season of student productions for grades 4-12 and three professional productions. It will offer unparalleled opportunities to Highwood's students and professionals, from staging Highwood's first professional musical in three years to bringing acclaimed Broadway performer Nick Blaemire and 34-time world dance champion Cate Caplin to Silver Spring.

"This season will showcase the exceptional talent of our students and professionals and the artistry of our teachers and directors," says Matthew Nicola, Highwood's Artistic Director.

Among the season's many highlights are *The Dog Must Die*, a new play by Madison Middleton, whose first play, *The Requiem*, was named one of the top ten shows of the Women's Voices Theater Festival in 2015. Highwood's winter musical, *School of Rock*, will be specially produced with a cast of 2nd through 12th graders and feature live musical performances by a group of younger students. In February, Student Directing Fellow Meg Miller will stage the Pulitzer-winning *The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds*, and in April, Highwood will be staging a new production of Nick Blaemire's *Soon* with two casts of professional and student actors performing in repertory under the direction of Cate Caplin. Later in the year, Highwood will stage a gender-blind *Romeo & Juliet* with a contemporary twist.

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“The theme extends beyond just rock and roll; each show this year brings a different perspective to our season theme, from powerful and moving to upbeat and rocking out. Yet each is thought-provoking and pushes audiences to think outside their comfort zones and discover new feelings and thoughts about their own lives and the lives of others” says Kevin Kearney, Highwood’s Executive Director.

Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike

By Christopher Durang

Directed by Melissa Robinson

October 6 - 29

In this comical spin on Anton Chekhov’s characters and themes, middle-aged Vanya and Sonia have spent their entire lives in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. When their successful movie actress sister returns to their childhood home with a young boyfriend in tow, chaos is unleashed that threatens to uproot their comfortable lives and the roof above them.

Follies

By James Goldman with Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Directed by Matthew Nicola

November 10 - 19

In one of Sondheim’s most beloved shows, Broadway impresario Dmitri Weismann gathers members of his famous pre-war Follies as a tribute to the iconic Weismann Theater. While revisiting the musical numbers that made them famous, the faded glamour girls confront ghosts of their younger selves and their own dissatisfaction.

School of Rock

Based on the Paramount Movie by Mike White

By Julian Fellows with New Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Lyrics by Glenn Slater

Directed by Kevin Kearney and Dylan Kaufman

December 8 - 17

Based on the smash hit film of the same name, this high-octane musical tells the story of guitarist Dewey Finn - recently out of a job and mistakenly employed as a substitute teacher. Dewey forms a rock band in his unsuspecting class of private school students and enters them into the local Battle of the Bands. Get ready to rock out like never before with the School of Rock actors playing their own instruments LIVE!

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The Dog Must Die

By Madison Middleton

Directed by Samuel Intrater

January 25 - February 11

This provocative drama transports us to a world that is uninhabitable - where concrete columns have formed above ground to house and save society. The torment and conflict that ensues not only challenges our conceptions of humanity itself, but forces us to examine the dark, primordial nature within us. In keeping with the play's environmental focus, Highwood's staging will be environmentally friendly.

The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds

By Paul Zindel

Directed by Meg Miller

February 2 - 11

Student Directing Fellow Meg Miller directs Paul Zindel's Pulitzer-winning drama about Tillie, a student growing marigolds from radioactive seeds for her school's science fair. Her efforts are complicated by her mother and manipulative sister, who constantly undermine her attempts to succeed.

Sweet Charity

By Neil Simon with Music by Cy Coleman and Lyrics by Dorothy Fields

Directed by Madison Middleton

March 16 - 18

Charity Hope Valentine is an eternal optimist and a dancer at the rundown Fan-Dango Ballroom. Convinced she's finally found a decent man, Charity lies about her profession. But things get complicated when he asks her to marry him.

The Home-School Shakespeare Production

Directed by Highwood's Home School Teaching Artists

March 16 - 17

Join us for a full-scale, original Shakespeare adaptation - using the Bard's own words - compiled by our Fall Home School Living Shakespeare students. Featuring Elizabethan costumes, stage combat, and the classic words of Shakespeare himself, this family-friendly show is guaranteed to thrill the adventure seeker within you!

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Soon

Book, Music and Lyrics by Nick Blaemire

Directed by Cate Caplin

April 12 - 29

Caution: all water on earth is about to evaporate, and the world is approaching its catastrophic end. So what next? Highwood puts a fresh take on Nick Blaemire's uplifting musical about a woman, her goldfish, and the life she is missing just beyond her doorstep with two casts of student and professional actors under the direction of Cate Caplin.

Romeo & Juliet

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Julia Capizzi

May 18 - 20

Patient ears attend and bear witness to Shakespeare's classic tragedy of star-crossed lovers - children of two warring families in the city of Verona whose love for each other brings strife, misunderstanding and a romance for the ages.

The Inaugural Year Long Production

By Arthur Laurents with Music and Lyrics by Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim

Directed by a team of Highwood staff

June 1 - 10

This landmark American musical by Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim brings *Romeo & Juliet* to New York's West Side in the 1950s. Caught between warring ethnic gangs, the Sharks and the Jets, Tony and Maria choose love over old rivalries. But romance, resentment and growing tensions create a bloody path to the musical's tragic conclusion.

Godspell

By John Michael Tebelak with Music and New Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

July 20 - 22

Based on the gospel of St. Matthew, Stephen Schwartz's hit rock opera explores Jesus Christ's final days in a tour of well-known theatrical devices, vaudeville and an array of musical styles. Prepare ye for a high-energy celebration of joy, peace, and the enormous family of mankind!

My Fair Lady

Book and Lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner with Music by Frederick Loewe

July 27 - 29

Based on George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, *My Fair Lady* is the gloriously witty Broadway musical charting Eliza Doolittle's transformation into a refined woman. With an irresistible score by Lerner and Loewe, this charming show, complete with an unexpected romance, will sweep you off your feet and leave you dancing all night!

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Play On!

By Rick Abbott

August 3 - 4

The show must go on...in spite of...everything. *Play On!* follows one theatre troupe's efforts to put on a show despite scenic catastrophes, fumbled lines, injuries, and an author who continuously changes the script.

About The Highwood Theatre

The Highwood Theatre is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing the community together through theatre. Now in its 15th Season, Highwood's guiding principle is "anyone can do theatre." Highwood was founded in 2004 and began executing its mission through seasons of professional quality theatre featuring all-student casts, design teams, and production staff. In 2013, in conjunction with its relocation to the heart of downtown Silver Spring, The Highwood Theatre expanded to carry out its mission more fully and develop innovative, engaging programming for artists of all ages through professional and student productions, classes, and programs in schools and for home schooled students.

Contact Information

Tickets: <http://www.thehighwoodtheatre.org/tickets.html>

The Highwood Theatre Office: 301-587-0697

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