



The KEEGAN THEATRE

in good company

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Keegan Theatre Announces 2017-2018 Season** *Diverse lineup aims to uplift in an unsettled time*

**May 5, 2017:** The Keegan Theatre is proud to announce its 2017-2018 season, featuring 2 DC Premieres, 1 World Premiere, and its 15<sup>th</sup> Ireland Tour of an American classic.

The lineup features a diverse combination of plays and musicals with both soft and hard edges, reflecting an artistic aim to encourage and inspire the DC community in the coming year.

“We’re trying to uncover what our audiences and this city are hungry for right now,” remarks Producing Artistic Director Mark A. Rhea, “and it’s art that inspires. We want to uplift, divert, and hearten people this season, and we want to do it the best way we know how: by presenting stories that not only entertain but also speak to the human condition and hope. We look forward to delivering each of these pieces in our signature style that focuses on intimacy and truth.”

The local season kicks off with two plays written and directed by women: ***Stones in His Pockets***, an hilarious homage to Ireland by Belfast playwright Marie Jones, and ***Top Girls***, Caryl Churchill’s Obie Award-winning play that examines the role of women in society and the effects of feminist ambitions. The combination of female playwrights and female directors showcases Keegan’s mission to support the voices and work of women in theatre.

Later in the season, Keegan offers the World Premiere of ***Other Life Forms***, a new play by DC playwright and actor Brandon McCoy. The selection, a dynamic comedy that sets out to prove the existence of love, springs from Keegan’s deep commitment to producing new works and the works of local artists.

The season also features the DC Premiere of ***The Undeniable Sound of Right Now*** by “House of Cards” writer and *Sex with Strangers* playwright Laura Eason, the first homegrown production of the new musical ***The Bridges of Madison County*** by Marsha Norman and Jason Robert Brown, the Tony Award-winning blockbuster musical about corruption in criminal justice and the chase for the American Dream, ***Chicago***, and the DC Premiere of ***Unnecessary Farce***, a fresh and hilarious American comedy.

Keegan will also host several cabaret, workshop, and staged reading events throughout the season, and Keegan PLAY-RAH-KA, Keegan's creative home for young people and families, will announce productions for families and camps, classes, and other opportunities for young people of all ages.

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The KEEGAN THEATRE presents  
the 2017-2018 season:

*Uplifting theatre*  
in an  
**unsettled time.**



**August/September 2017**

## **American Buffalo**

by David Mamet

directed by Jon Townson

**\*2017 Ireland Tour\***

*Production touring Ireland only – not performing in United States.*

In a Chicago junk shop three small time crooks plot to rob a man of his coin collection, the showpiece of which is a valuable "Buffalo nickel." These high-minded grifters fancy themselves businessmen pursuing legitimate free enterprise. But the reality of the three -- Donny, the oafish junk shop owner; Bobby, a young junkie Donny has taken under his wing; and "Teach," a violently paranoid braggart -- is that they are merely pawns caught up in their own game of last-chance, dead-end, empty pipe dreams.

Winner of the 1977 New York Drama Critics' Circle Award, Best American Play

*"Gripping drama"* - The New York Times

*"Mamet is an actor's playwright... [He] senses the possibilities inarticulateness affords a savvy actor."*  
- Women's Wear Daily

*"It isn't often that a play with a dramatic intensity of American Buffalo comes to the Broadway theatre."*  
- New York Post

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**September/October 2017**

## **Stones in His Pockets**

by Marie Jones

directed by Abigail Isaac Fine

In this wicked tragicomedy, Jake and Charlie meet when working as extras on a big American movie being shot in Ireland. Charlie's video shop in Ballycastle has gone bankrupt and Jake has returned to Kerry after a futile few years in the US. The movie is a wonderful break from worrying about their futures...until the harsh realities of rural life break through.

*"STONES IN HIS POCKETS...is serious comedy. It allows audiences to laugh about something as grave as the last gasp of someone's hopes and dreams."* – The New York Times

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**November 2017**

## **Top Girls**

by Caryl Churchill

directed by Amber Jackson

Marlene hosts a dinner party in a London restaurant to celebrate her promotion to managing director of 'Top Girls' employment agency. Her guests are five women from the past: Isabella Bird (1831- 1904) – the adventurous traveller; Lady Nijo (born 1258) – the medieval courtesan who became a Buddhist nun and travelled on foot through Japan; Dull Gret, who, as Dulle Griet in a Bruegel painting, led a crowd of women on a charge through hell; Pope Joan – the transvestite early female pope; and Patient Griselda, an obedient wife out of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales. As the evening passes, the story of Marlene's rise to the top is revealed.

1983 Obie Award-winner for Best Play

*"A blistering yet sympathetic look at women who achieve success by adopting the worst traits of self-made men [...] Truly original."* - The New York Times

*"Very funny and provocative [...] A mind lifting experience."* - The New York Post

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December 2017

## An Irish Carol

by Matthew J. Keenan

directed by Mark A. Rhea

**\*Keegan's own holiday tradition\***

Set in a modern Dublin pub, AN IRISH CAROL is an homage to Dickens' classic – told as only the Irish can. The play, both comic and touching, follows one evening in the life of David, a wealthy pub owner who has lost touch with his own humanity in the interest of self-protection and material success. But on this Christmas Eve – challenged by a voice from the past, provoked by those in this present, and faced with the reality of lonely future – David's life may change forever.

*"Trust the Irish to put a bit of grain in the eggnog. AN IRISH CAROL is sweet and cheerfully profane ..."*  
– The Washington Post

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January/February 2018

## Unnecessary Farce

by Paul Slade Smith

directed by Ray Ficca

**\*DC Premiere\***

Two cops. Three crooks. Eight doors. Go. In a cheap motel room, an embezzling mayor is supposed to meet with his female accountant, while in the room next door, two undercover cops wait to catch the meeting on videotape. But there's some confusion as to who's in which room, who's being videotaped, who's taken the money, who's hired a hit man, and why the accountant keeps taking off her clothes.

*"The laugh-out-loud comedy has everything one can hope for in a modern-day farce: two likeable cops operating way out of their league, a supposedly crooked mayor with impeccable timing, his innocent-acting wife, a shy accountant with a penchant for dropping her drawers, a nervous double agent who's like to get IN those drawers, a Scottish hit man whose brogue gets thicker the angrier he gets, two adjoining hotel rooms, simmering sexual tension and eight doors a slammin'."* - Between the Lines (Michigan)

*"A fast and furious new farce."* – Playbill

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**March/April 2018**

## Chicago

music by John Kander, lyrics by Fred Ebb, book by Fred Ebb and Bob Fosse

directed by Susan Marie Rhea and Mark A. Rhea

In roaring twenties Chicago, chorine Roxie Hart murders a faithless lover and convinces her hapless husband Amos to take the rap...until he finds out he's been duped and turns on Roxie. Convicted and sent to death row, Roxie and another "Merry Murderess" Velma Kelly, vie for the spotlight and the headlines, ultimately joining forces in search of the "American Dream": fame, fortune and acquittal. This sharp edged satire features a dazzling score that sparked immortal staging by Bob Fosse.

Winner of six Tony Awards

*"Fosse's best work, uncompromising and with real strength showing in every idea and image."* – Newsweek

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**May 2018**

## The Undeniable Sound of Right Now

by Laura Eason

directed by Brandon McCoy

**\*DC Premiere\***

It's 1992. Chicago. Hank is struggling to keep his legendary rock club going amid changing times and changing tastes. But when his beloved daughter, Lena, starts dating a rising star DJ, Hank must contend with the destructive power of the Next Big Thing. Like a blast of feedback from a Fender amp, Laura Eason's (*Sex with Strangers*, "House of Cards") THE UNDENIABLE SOUND OF RIGHT NOW brings to hilarious and heartbreaking life the moment when Kurt and Courtney ruled, but Moby was just around the corner...

*"...engaging...Ms. Eason...draws an affectionate but unsentimental portrait of this makeshift family as it undergoes a period of sudden stress."* - The New York Times.

*"The vividness with which Eason brings Hank's [Bar] to life...transports viewers to a different era, one where there was an actual element of danger to the music we listened to and the places where we listened...In an era where all of the old music venues, bars, and diners are closing down, it's undeniable how timely and contemplative Eason's play truly is."* - TheaterMania.com.

“...funny, wrenching and right on the money...Eason wisely gives each character their moment, their riff...*THE UNDENIABLE SOUND OF RIGHT NOW* rocks!” - NYTheatreGuide.com.

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**June/July 2018**

## Other Life Forms

by Brandon McCoy

directed by Shirley Serotsky

**\*World Premiere\***

Roommates Ben and Jeff couldn't be more different. Ben is a struggling journalist who can't get anything to go his way. Jeff is a successful researcher who glides through life with little resistance. At Jeff's insistence, they both give online dating a try. Ben meets Molly and the results are volatile, while Jeff meets Leslie and they make a connection. Over the course of the evening a truth is revealed which sets forth a series of hysterical and illuminating events. *OTHER LIFE FORMS* is a dynamic comedy that sets out to prove the existence of love, and how we often get in the way of it.

Keegan is thrilled to deepen its commitment to producing new works with this World Premiere by DC playwright Brandon McCoy.

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**August 2018**

## The Bridges of Madison County

book by Marsha Norman, music and lyrics by Jason Robert Brown

directed by Susan Marie Rhea and Kurt Boehm

Based on the best-selling novel, *THE BRIDGES OF MADISON COUNTY* was developed by the Pulitzer- and Tony Award-winning creative team of Jason Robert Brown (*The Last Five Years*, *Parade*, *Songs for a New World*) and Marsha Norman. A sweeping romance about the roads we travel, the doors we open and the bridges we dare to cross, this 2014 Tony Award-winner for Best Score and Orchestrations captures the lyrical expanse of America's heartland and the yearning entangled in the eternal question "What if...?"

*"Jason Robert Brown...brings layered textures of yearning to his songs for Francesca that make us experience the world through her startled, newly awakened senses."* – The New York Times

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**PLUS** announcements of cabaret, workshop, and staged reading events throughout the season and Keegan PLAY-RAH-KA productions for families and camps, classes, and other opportunities for young people of all ages. *Learn more about Keegan PLAY-RAH-KA at [www.keegantheatre.com/playrahka](http://www.keegantheatre.com/playrahka).*

KEEGAN  
**play \* Rah \* Ka**  
theatrical experiences for families  
creative exploration for emerging artists