



THE HEATH

BY Lauren Gunderson DIRECTED BY Sean Daniels

FEBRUARY 13 - MARCH 10, 2019

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The Heath

Murder for Two

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley

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Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley

The Haunted Life

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Murder for Two The Haunted Life merrimac

Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley The Haunted Life

FROM SEAN DANIELS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



One of the things we've tried to do during my time here is to shine a light on all the different people it takes to make a show happen. To educate our entire community about how many top notch people it takes to pull off even the simplest of one person shows. (Though my staff will tell you I never pick simple one-man shows—and that's fair.)

Perhaps one of the most important positions, one of the most crucial in terms of long-term success, and barely ever

mentioned . . . is the Board President. Admittedly no one outside of the board knows what the Board President does, and I think even on the board, it's about a 50/50 split.

What's the reason to make sure everyone knows about this? We currently at MRT have a truly gifted leader in Bill Wyman.

The way non-profits work is that the board leads. It sets the big goals, puts itself out there to make the goals possible, and then lets the staff execute the strategic plan. There's no such thing as a professional staff and an amateur board. That's called 'turnover.' Bill is leading our strategic planning to make sure that MRT is thinking long-term in terms of what choices it needs to make now to be successful in 10 years. He's attending conferences to learn best practices and help our organization be known nationally.

And while that's a full time job, he actually has a full time job at Circle Health, which as you know has been our season sponsor for the last two years. That's huge. So much of how we're able to be a local and national leader is facilitated by Bill. (Also, Circle Health birthed our daughter—I mean, is there anything this sponsor doesn't do?)

So, as you're excited for the growth of MRT, as you're excited by the vision, take a moment to thank Bill Wyman and Circle Health. They made much of tonight possible.

FROM BONNIE J. BUTKAS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



You're an important part of what has proven to be an extraordinary 40th Anniversary Season so far: *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon) topped the list of our best-selling shows, and our stage boasted a record number of women playwrights, directors, and designers. Now you're here for the first of two back-to-back world premieres: *The Heath*, also by Lauren Gunderson, followed by *The Haunted Life*, by Sean Daniels, adapted from the book by Jack Kerouac.

You are an essential part of this season, and I hope you know that we're celebrating you—our loyal subscribers and donors and ticket buyers!

We're closing out this milestone season with a glamorous 40th Anniversary Gala on **June 22** at Lowell Memorial Auditorium. I hope you'll consider joining us as we celebrate our history and dance our way into the future. Check it out at **mrt.org/gala**.

Our next season, the 2019-20 season, promises to be equally exciting. If you renew your subscription by **March 8**, you will capture the biggest savings. In addition to getting the deepest discount on regularly-priced tickets, you'll also receive the best seats, free exchanges, free parking, and discounts to share with friends and family. I know you're busy, so I want to let you in on a secret—we make it easy to exchange your tickets for a different date, and our box office staff is the best.

Lastly, if you add a \$100 donation to any subscription order, you will become a SUPER SUBSCRIBER, which will bring you exclusive invitations to special events, including our popular Super Subscriber Behind-the-Scenes Tour of the theatre.

You can find out all about our 2019-20 Season on **March 5** at 6:00 pm at our Season Announcement event. It's open to the public, and it's a delightful opportunity to get a sneak peek at our 41st Season. Our Artistic Director Sean Daniels will tell you what he loves about each play; our playwrights will share a bit about their work; and some of your favorite actors will perform brief readings. It's open to the public, so please bring your friends!

You deserve a round of applause for 40 years. Thank you!

Q&A: PLAYWRIGHT LAUREN GUNDERSON



What compelled you to write the script? I started the script

before my PawPaw died as it occurred to me that the only reference I had for his condition was the literary figure of King

Lear. My PawPaw was suffering from extreme dementia and could no longer recognize me. I lived in California, far away from him in South Carolina, which made that worse. When he died I was instantly regretful of all the time I didn't get with him and started writing this play. It's a love letter to him, an apology, and a reckoning, as well as a chance to discover a man I thought I knew so well.

What does your mother, PawPaw's daughter, think of the play?

Mom has seen me perform it! She was moved and, I think, a little nervous. But the point of the play is to come together, to honor her father, and to confront the darker instincts we have, to turn away from illness and death. But by confronting them (even laughing at them as *The Heath* does), we can digest and dispel them.

What was the most important thing you learned in researching and discovering your grandfather's life after he died?

So much! His war history is truly profound to me. What he managed to survive was unreal. I had never read his letters that he wrote from inside a POW prison during the war, which were chilling. I also never knew he called my grandmother "sugar babe" when they were courting.

How did the addition of the banjo and the songs come about?

I was inspired to add banjo to the play when I remembered how much PawPaw loved Flatt and Scrugg's bluegrass music. It felt like a crazy challenge to myself. The songs are simple but full of emotion and heart. The big ending song, *Storm Still*, was the most cathartic to write. It really allows me to say, "I love you, I miss you, I'm proud of you," to my grandfather.

How does the raging storm in *King Lear* figure into the story?

The storm represents the tumult and uncertainty of my grandfather's Alzheimer's disease, the damage that it can do to a family, the unpredictable sadness and 'natural disaster' of dementia. It also represents what I feel as my betrayal of my grandfather by not showing up for him enough when he was sick. His disease and death was a storm, and survivors like me are often left with the emotional wreckage afterwards.

"I felt like my PawPaw, even though he was physically there, was no longer *really* there."

Q&A: PLAYWRIGHT LAUREN GUNDERSON

What goes through your mind when you realize that someone you've loved and known your whole life no longer remembers you?

It's pretty shocking and terrible. I felt like my PawPaw, even though he was physically there, was no longer *really* there. He wasn't the same man any more. In many ways I felt terrible for him because I know he'd not want to be remembered in such a state. It's heartbreaking. This is the reality and urgency of Alzheimer's and dementia research. If we could find a solution to these deteriorating diseases of the mind, it would be such a gift to the world. It would give dignity back to so many. It would save so many lives and families.

What advice would you offer a friend if she told you today that her grandfather had just been diagnosed with Alzheimer's?

Show up. Be present. Play music. Tell stories. Get them talking and record it. Say I love you. Take care of yourself.



George Judy and Miranda Barnet as KD Martin and Lauren Gunderson. The real KD Martin is featured in the background. Photo by Meghan Moore.

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WORLD PREMIERE

YOUR HEART, WHERE

WILL IT LEAD YOU?

IF YOU FOLLOW

ву Sean Daniels BASED ON THE BOOK BY JACK Kerouac DIRECTED BY Sean Daniels and christopher oscar peña



Home, Lowell, 1942. College student Peter argues politics with his conservative father, dreams of adventure with his buddies, and romances his girl. It's a breezy, golden summer until WWII brings an alarming darkness. Peter witnesses the toll the war takes on everyone he loves, and he desperately seeks his place in a changing America.

In honor of the MRT's 40th Anniversary Season in Lowell, MRT brings a new adaptation of a "lost" novel set in Lowell by Jack Kerouac, who was born and raised here. UMass Lowell professor Todd F. Tietchen edited the manuscript, which is full of Kerouac's gorgeous and poetic prose. It is adapted by MRT Artistic Director Sean Daniels (The White Chip) and produced in collaboration with The Estate of Jack Kerouac.

SEAN DANIELS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



BONNIE J. BUTKAS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

PRESENTS THE HEATH

BY LAUREN GUNDERSON*

FEATURING

MIRANDA BARNETT GEORGE JUDY

SCENIC DESIGNER TANYA ORELLANA

COSTUME DESIGNER MIRANDA KAU GIURLEO^

LIGHTING DESIGNER MARÍA CRISTINA FUSTÉ^

SOUND DESIGNER DANNY ERDBERG^{**} **PROJECTION DESIGNER**

SEÀGHAN MCKAY^

PRODUCER PETER CREWE PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

MAEGAN A. CONROY

DIRECTED BY SEAN DANIELS⁺

FEBRUARY 13 - MARCH 10, 2019

40th Anniversary Community Voices Project recorded, edited, and mastered by David Remedios.

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Merrimack Repertory Theatre is funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Merrimack Repertory Theatre operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), Actors' Equity
^~~ciation (AEA), Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC), and United Scenic Artists (USA) Local USA-829, IATSE.

The Cohort Club is funded in part by Mass Humanities, which receives support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and is an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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Love our 2018-19 season so far? Want to keep your seats? Come back for our 2019-20 Season by renewing your subscription or by joining our subscriber family **by March 8** in order to get early bird pricing! Full Season and Flex Pass packages are available now.

MRT

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978-654-4678

CAST

In alphabetical order

Miranda Barnett	Lauren
George Judy	KD/King Lear

ADDITIONAL STAFF

Assistant Costume Designer	Ryann Corbett
Associate Sound Designer	Adam Smith

SPECIAL THANKS

Karen Gosey Martin

TIME AND PLACE

Present time, America.

Run time is approximately 95 minutes with no intermission.



The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.



The indicated Costume, Lighting, and Sound Designers in this production are represented by United Scenic Artists (USA) Local USA-829, IATSE.



Merrimack Repertory Theatre is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre.

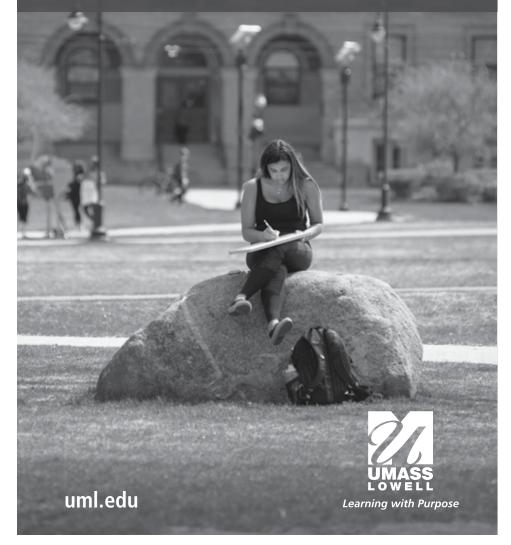


JOIN OUR <u>41st SEASON ANNOUNCEMENT EVENT</u> ON TUESDAY, MARCH 5

Get a sneak peek at seven new productions Merrimack Repertory Theatre | 6:00 pm 50 East Merrimack St, Lowell, MA

Visit MRT.ORG/SEASONANNOUNCEMENT to RSVP your seat.

UMASS LOWELL is proud to support "The Heath" and the artists of the Merrimack Repertory Theatre.



WHO'S WHO

MIRANDA BARNETT (*Lauren*) MRT: Debut. Classically trained musician turned actor, Miranda has enjoyed a broad performance career ranging from Rossini to Shakespeare. She is

thrilled, albeit a bit daunted, to draw from her Southern roots and now tackle the banjo for this production of The Heath. A few of her favorite regional credits include La Marquise de Merteuil in Les Liaisons Dangereuses, Bev/ Kathy in Clybourne Park, Masha in Vania, Sonia, Masha, and Spike, Magenta in The Rocky Horror Show (The Warehouse Theatre), Olivia in Twelfth Night (The Distracted Globe), Raymonde Chandebise in A Flea In Her Ear, Beggar Woman/Lucy in Sweeney Todd (Centre Stage), Truvy in Steel Magnolias (Clinton Area Showboat Theatre), and member of the 10actor cast of My Fair Lady at Triad Stage. Miranda studied voice performance at Florida State University, choral conducting at Furman University, and received an MFA in Acting from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Based in the Southeast, she is also a dialect/acting coach, director, and adjunct professor of theatre at The South Carolina School of the Arts at Anderson University. Miranda is a born and bred South Carolinian. and while she has travelled far and wide, the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains have always beckoned. Along with her husband, Aaron, and two year-old son, Wilkes, she is happy to call the beautiful city of Greenville home. Upcoming engagements include Adrienne in Cry It Out at The Warehouse Theatre, and director of Good People at Centre Stage. Miranda is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association. www.mirandabarnett.com.



GEORGE JUDY (*KD/King Lear*) George is Gresdna A. Doty Professor of Theatre at The Louisiana State University, where he headed the MFA Acting Program and served as Artistic

Director of Swine Palace, the AEA theatre

in residence at LSU. Professor Judy is a member of Actors' Equity Association and was recently invested as a Fellow of the American Theatre at the Kennedy Center alongside such theatre luminaries as Michael Khan and William Esper. His credits as an actor, writer, director, and educator include work with the Royal National Theatre Studio, London, The Asolo Theatre, Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, Pennsylvania Centre Stage, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Texas Shakespeare Festival, and twelve seasons with the Tony award winning Utah Shakespearean Festival where he performed such favorite roles as Bottom in A Midsummer Night's Dream, Sir Toby Belch in Twelfth Night, and Polonius in Hamlet and was producer and director for USF's Plays in Progress, which developed important new works and playwrights for the American theatre. More recent credits include Falstaff in The Merry Wives of Windsor, Richelieu in The Three Musketeers and Alonso in The Tempest at the Illinois Shakespeare Festival and the title role in King Lear for Swine Palace where he has also starred as Sugar in Rising Water by John Biguenet and originated the role of Heinar in the American premiere of Andri Lupp's Dove. His many regional credits include a stint as a Singing Ringmaster with Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey and his highly praised adaptation of Ibsen's A Doll's House, premiered on the Swine Palace stage, where he also has directed recently Arcadia, August: Osage County, a new stage version of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice, and the Louisiana premiere of Adrian Hall's adaptation of Robert Penn Warren's All the Kings Men. His award-winning adaptation of Sophocles' Antigone, published by Pioneer Drama, has been anthologized and performed across the country, and he continues work to complete a new book, Designing Life: A Practical Approach to Acting and Living, which draws on his more than 30 years teaching acting and directing to countless gifted young students now working across the country in theatre, film, and related fields.

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WHO'S WHO

MRT: Slow Food. Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley, The Villains' Supper Club, Little Orphan Danny, Silent Sky, My 80-Year-Old Boyfriend, Women in Jeopardy!, The Making of a Great Moment, 45 Plays for 45 Presidents, Home of the Brave, Tinker to Evers to Chance, I and You, The Lion. Sean has directed at Manhattan Theatre Club (The Lion, Drama Desk Award & Theatre World Award, nominated for Lucille Lortel and Outer Critics Circle), Lynn Redgrave (NYC), The Kennedy Center (Washington, D.C.), St. James (West End, London - The Lion, winner of Best New Musical), Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, Portland Center Stage, Geva Theatre, Old Globe, The Geffen, Playmakers Rep, A.C.T., Cleveland Play House, Milwaukee Rep, Alliance Theatre, California Shakespeare, Dad's Garage Theatre Company, Swine Palace, Neo-Futurists, Aurora Theatre, Crowded Fire, and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Sean has been named "one of the top 15 up & coming artists in the U.S., whose work will be transforming America's stages for decades to come" and "One Of Seven People Reshaping And Revitalizing The American Musical" by American Theatre magazine. His direction and shows have won "Best Play" and "Best Director" in the Bay Area, Portland, Rochester, and Atlanta. He's previously served as the Artist-At-Large for Geva Theatre Center and spent four years at the Tony Award-winning Actors Theatre of Louisville as the theatre's Associate Artistic Director (where he directed 17 productions including five Humana Festivals). Mr. Daniels is the former Associate Artistic Director/Resident Director of the California Shakespeare Theater and before that spent a decade as the Artistic Director and Co-Founder of Dad's Garage Theatre Company in Atlanta. He has developed new work with the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, Ars Nova, PlayPenn, Lark, PlayLabs, New York Stage and Film, Asolo Rep, Goodspeed Opera, Weston Playhouse, Bay Area Playwrights, Magic Theatre and was the first American director asked to attend the Baltic American Playwrights Conference in Hiiumaa, Estonia. He'd love to hear from

SEAN DANIELS (Artistic Director, Director)

you, on Twitter @seandaniels or email him at sean.daniels@mrt.org.

LAUREN GUNDERSON (Playwright) Lauren is a playwright, screenwriter and short story author from Atlanta, GA. She received her BA in English/Creative Writing at Emory University, and her MFA in Dramatic Writing at NYU Tisch, where she was also a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. She was named the most produced playwright in America by American Theatre Magazine in 2017, was awarded the 2016 Lanford Wilson Award from the Dramatist Guild, the 2016 Otis Gurnsey Award for Emerging Writer, and was awarded two prestigious 2014 Steinberg/ ATCA New Play Award for her play, I And You (also a Susan Smith Blackburn and John Gassner Award finalist) and The Book of Will. That play was an NNPN Rolling World Premiere that started at Marin Theatre Company and has seen over 40 productions nationwide. She is also a recipient of the Mellon Foundation's Three-Year Residency with Marin Theatre Company. She co-authored the play Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley with Margot Melcon, which received a three-way world premiere in 2016 and is now published at Dramatists Play Publishing. It is also one of the most produced plays in America for 2017-18.

TANYA ORELLANA (Scenic Designer) Tanya designs performance spaces for Theater, Dance, Opera and Puppetry. Originally from San Francisco, she is a core member of the award winning ensemble Campo Santo, participating in their intimate New Work Process, conceptualizing and designing sets alongside the writing process. Selected design collaborations: SAPO, by Culture Clash at The Getty Villa (Los Angeles, CA), Casa de Spirits written and directed by Roger Guenveur Smith at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum (San Francisco, CA), Drv Powder directed by Jennifer King at Aurora Theatre (Berkeley, Ca), Spiritrials directed by Marc Bamuthi Joseph and The Mexico Premiere of Angels in America directed by Martín Acosta at Teatro Juan Ruiz de Alarcón in Mexico City. Tanva received her



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WHO'S WHO

MFA in Scenic Design from CalArts and is the 2016 recipient of the Princess Grace Fabergé Theatre Award. Her design work on *Angels in America* will be featured in the US Emerging Designers Exhibit at the Prague Quadrennial 2019.

MIRANDA KAU GIURLEO (Costume Designer) MRT: Native Gardens, The Royale, A Christmas Carol, Chill. Regional: Dancing at Lughnasa, True West, The Effect, Flight of the Monarch, Totalitarians, Lettice and Lovage, The New Electric Ballroom, Fighting Over Beverly, Ponies, Dear Liar, Our Son's Wedding, The Heidi Chronicles, The Wind in the Willows, Calvin Berger (Gloucester Stage Company); The Scottsboro Boys (IRNE Award for Outstanding Costume Design), Allegiance (SpeakEasy Stage Company); The Convert, Matchless/The Happy Prince, Matt and Ben, Roots of Liberty (Central Square Theatre); Leftovers, Dry Land, Shockheaded Peter, She Kills Monsters, Love Person, Neighbors, GRIMM, The Good Negro, After the Quake (Company One); Macbeth, Julius Caesar, Midsummer Night's Dream (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company's 2nd Stage); Richard III, Measure for Measure, As You Like It, Two Gentlemen of Verona (Actor's Shakespeare Project). Miranda has also designed and built costumes for the U.S.S. Constitution Museum's original production Sailor's Wives and Sailor's Lives. She is currently on the faculty at Bridgewater State University where designs include: Gypsy, Young Frankenstein, Assassins, Pilgrims of the Night, The Foreigner, Conference of the Birds, and ThreePenny Opera. MirandaGiurleo.com

MARÍA CRISTINA FUSTÉ (Lighting Designer) MRT: Abigail/1702 Theater: Sweat directed by Elena Araoz (People's Light Theater, PA), Anna in the Tropics (Colorado Spring Fine Arts Center, CO), Mud and The Conduct of Life by María Irene Fornés, and Prospect by Octavio Solis, all directed by Elena Araoz (BOUNDLESS theatre company, NYC), Newsies (Aurora Theatre and Atlanta Lyric, GA), In the Heights and The Hunchback

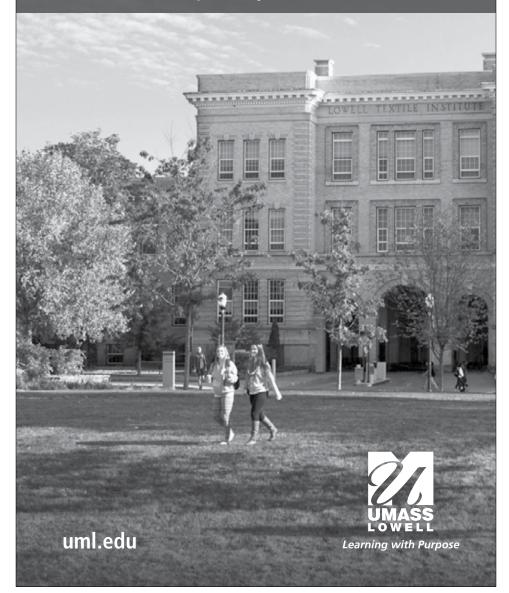
of Notre Dame (Aurora Theatre and Theatrical Outfit, Atlanta GA), Mariela in the Desert by Karen Zacarias (Aurora Theatre Company, Lawrenceville GA). Opera: Cecilia Valdés (Teatro Colón, Bogotá Colombia). Tosca, Bluebeard's Castle, Madama Butterfly, Don Pasquale, and L'Elisir d'Amore, all directed by Gilberto Valenzuela (Ópera de Puerto Rico, San Juan PR). Training: BA in theater University of Puerto Rico, MFA in Lighting Design from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Awards: Princess Grace Award recipient/ Pierre Cardin Award in Theater 2018 (MRT), Suzi Bass Award in 2016 and 2017 for Outstanding Lighting Design on a Musical (Atlanta, GA). She is also the founder and Executive Artistic Director of Boundless Theatre Company. www.mcfuste.com

DANNY ERDBERG (Sound Designer) Danny is pleased to return to Merrimack Rep, where previous work includes Native Gardens, Little Orphan Danny, My 80-Year-Old Boyfriend, The White Chip, and The Lion. Daniel's designs have been heard at numerous New York City theatres, including The Public, Roundabout, City Center, 59E59, Atlantic, Prospect and HERE. Highlights include the American premiere of Carvl Churchill's Drunk Enough to Say I Love You, Mike Daisey's Last Cargo Cult and Time it Was with Bill Irwin. Regional credits include Arena Stage, Milwaukee Rep, Geffen Playhouse, ACT, The Geva, Virginia Stage, Northshore and Long Wharf, as well as productions in Korea, Japan, China, Canada and Cuba. He is a frequent Broadway associate designer, where credits include The Iceman Cometh, Significant Other, Violet, The Glass Menagerie, A Streetcar Named Desire, The Heiress, and The Nance. Daniel is a member of USA829, IATSE, SDC and the Lincoln Center Director's Lab. He is a faculty member at Tisch/NYU and a graduate of Northwestern University.

SEÁGHAN MCKAY (Projection Designer) MRT: Little Orphan Danny, Memory House. Regional: Swan Lake, The Boston Ballet; La Boheme, The Flying Dutchman, The Boston



UMASS LOWELL is proud to support the art and artists of the Merrimack Repertory Theatre.



WHO'S WHO

Lyric Opera; Gershwin Spetacular: Promenade, The Boston Pops; Educating Rita, Huntington Theatre Company; Best of Enemies, Florida Rep; All the Way, TheatreSquared; Golda's Balcony, New Repertory Theatre; Sondheim on Sondheim (IRNE Award), On the Town (IRNE Nomination), Big River, Lyric Stage; A Disappearing Number (IRNE Nomination), Underground Railway Theater; Big Fish (IRNE Nomination), Carrie: the Musical, Next to Normal, Nine, Striking 12, [title of show], and Jerry Springer: The Opera, SpeakEasy Stage Company; Merrily We Roll Along, Rent, Boston Conservatory; Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992, Light Up the Sky, Emerson Stage; Beyond the Boundaries, Hecuba, As You Like It, Brandeis Theater Company; The Threepenny Opera, Boston College; Godspell, Gordon College; Both/And, MIT Museum. Film/Television: Assistant/Editor: PBS Becoming Helen Keller Des. Peter Nigrini. Education: Boston College. Other: Lecturer in Lighting Production and Media Design at the Boston University School of Theater. seaghanmckay.com

MAEGAN A. CONROY (Production Stage Manager) Maegan is thrilled to be returning to MRT for The Heath! Selected previous credits include stage manager on Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley, Native Gardens, The Royale, and Chill (Merrimack Repertory Theatre); Guards at the Taj (Central Square Theater); The Effect and A Measure of Normalcy (Gloucester Stage Company); Creditors and Ugly Lies the Bone (Shakespeare & Company); The Legend of Georgia McBride (Greater Boston Stage Company); assistant stage manager on She Loves Me, Mame, Lucky Stiff, Sweet Charity, Funny...Forum, and How to Succeed...Trving (Greater Boston Stage Company). Maegan received her BFA in Stage Management from Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. She and her husband live with their dog in Lowell, MA.

PETER CREWE (Producer) MRT: Producer: Slow Food, Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley, Murder for Two, Native Gardens, The Villains' Supper Club, Little Orphan Danny, Lost Laughs: The Slapstick Tragedy of Fatty Arbuckle, KNYUM, A Christmas Carol, The Royale, Going to See the Kid, Abigail/ 1702, 45 Plays for 45 Presidents, Home of the Brave, Tinker to Evers to Chance, It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play. Stage Manager: The Outgoing Tide. Assistant Stage Manager: Out of the City, Oceanside, The Best Brothers, 13 Things About Ed Carpolotti, Dusk Rings a Bell, Equally Divided, The Devil's Music: The Life and Blues of Bessie Smith, Stella and Lou, Proof, Red, Half'n Half'n Half, Mrs. Whitney, The Voice of the Turtle, Two Jews Walk Into a War..., The Exceptionals, Tryst, Four Places, The Last Days of Mickey & Jean, Black Pearl Sings!, Fabuloso, The Seafarer, Bad Dates, Tranced, The Fantasticks, A View of the Harbor (workshop), Stage Management Intern (2004). Regional: Company Manager, Studio Arena Theatre; Production Assistant, Studio Arena Theatre; Assistant Stage Manager, Disney's Beauty and the Beast, Seaside Music Theatre; Assistant Stage Manager, Lucie de Lammermoor, Boston Lyric Opera; Stage Management Intern, Trinity Repertory Company. Education: BFA, Salem State College in 2004.

BONNIE J. BUTKAS (Executive Director) Bonnie most recently served as the Senior Director of Foundation Relations at Rochester Institute of Technology, where she led the university's strategic efforts to secure funding from private and family foundations. During her tenure, RIT secured its first significant gifts from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Henry Luce Foundation. Prior to RIT, she was the Director of Development at Geva Theatre Center in Rochester, NY overseeing five years of unprecedented growth in the company's contributed income and playing a key role in a successful \$10 million capital campaign to renovate the building and grow the theatre's



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WHO'S WHO

endowment. In New York City, she served as the Director of External Relations at the York Theatre Company, the Director of Development and Communications at TADA! Youth Theatre, Directing Assistant on The Lion King on Broadway, and the co-founder of Lexington Dance Collective. Prior to NYC, she was the Managing Director of Bristol Valley Theater in Naples, NY. Butkas was raised in the Finger Lakes region of Western New York and holds degrees in Journalism and Dance from the University at Buffalo. She volunteered with the Association of Fundraising Professionals of Genesee Valley, Girl Scouts of Western New York, and the YWCA of Rochester & Monroe County. In Fall 2016, she co-founded Action Together Rochester. She serves on the MCC's Academic Arts Center Advisory Board, and lives in Westford, MA with her family and her dog, Zeus.

MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE

(MRT) celebrates 40 years this season as the Merrimack Valley's professional theatre. With a steadfast commitment to contemporary voices and new plays, MRT produces seven works, including several world premieres, each season. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Sean Daniels and Executive Director Bonnie J. Butkas. MRT strives to fulfill its mission "to share theatrical stories of human understanding that reflect and engage our community." The company guarantees that shows are accessible to audiences of all incomes; partners with businesses and non-profit groups to fully engage the community; and contributes to the economic vitality of Lowell by attracting diverse audiences from throughout the region.



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For more information on tickets, tables, sponsorship opportunities, please visit **mrt.org/gala**, or you can contact our development office at **978-654-7559** or **devomail@mrt.org**.

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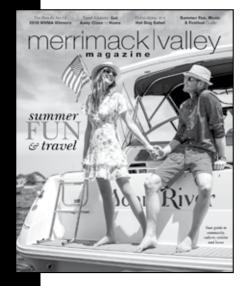
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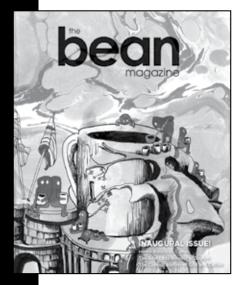


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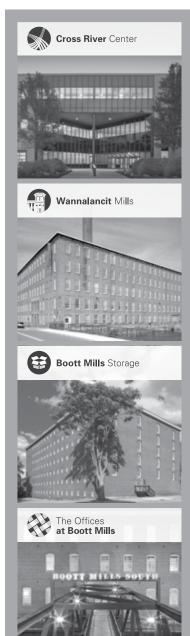
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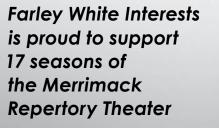
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Bottom pic: Joel Van Liew, Terry & Phyllis Howard, Mary & Dan Frantz, Denise & John Glaser, Brian Beacock, Daina Griffith, and Bonnie J. Butkas.

LUNCH ON STAGE

Producers Circle donors, MRT Trustees, actors Brian Beacock, Daina Michelle Griffith, and Joel Van Liew, and Executive Director Bonnie J. Butkas, shared a lunch at one of the tables on the set of *Slow Food*. The meal provided a rare view from the other side of the footlights. Thank you to Jimmy John's for the lunch and Olympos Bakery for the desserts.

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During the first week of *The Heath*, fullseason subscribers received renewal notices with a 25% discount offer for the 2019-20 Season — one that promises to thrill with a full slate of arresting stories, tantalizing characters, and intriguing locales. **RENEW BY MARCH** 8 to take advantage of this steep discount. If you did not receive your renewal notice, please call the box office at 978-654-4678 or email box_office@mrt.org. (Mini package subscribers will receive renewal notices in a few weeks.)

MRT IN BRIEF



Miranda Barnett

INTERVIEW: MIRANDA BARNETT ON LEARNING THE BANJO FOR *THE HEATH*

There is nothing more daunting than learning a new instrument in a matter of months, even for classically trained musician and actress Miranda Barnett. She said, "I had never even held a banjo until six months ago. I have beginner-level experience with guitar, and took cello lessons for a few months, but primarily I am trained as a pianist and singer so this prospect was certainly intimidating."

"I'm not sure if I should be proud of this or not (laughing)—YouTube has been my greatest resource. For the gospel tunes, I found tutorials of arrangements in a Scruggs' style that I liked and learned by watching and reading the tablature," she said. "I appreciate that [Lauren Gunderson] lets me off the hook by declaring right in the script that, 'I don't play that well.' There's no expectation of virtuosic playing, thank God!" Read the full interview on MRT's blog at mrtbackstage.wordpress.com.

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· Preview the new season at dinner with Artistic Director before it is announced to the public

For more information, please contact:

Jill Meredith Vinci, Development Manager at 978-654-7579 or jill.vinci@mrt.org.





Local food, craft beer, and spirits.

DINING GUIDE

Please patronize these restaurants. All of them support MRT through advertising, trade agreements, or fundraisers. Thank you!



1. 50 WARREN LOUNGE (Lounge & Bar) 978-934-6950 | 50 Warren St.

2. ATHENIAN CORNER RESTAURANT (Greek) 978-458-7052 | 207 Market St.

3. BLUE TALEH (Thai & Japanese) 978-453-1112 | 15 Kearney Sq.

4. BREW'D AWAKENING COFFEEHAUS (Coffee House) 978-454-2739 | 61 Market St.

5. CAVALEIRO'S (Portuguese) 978-458-2800, | 573 Lawrence St. **6. COBBLESTONES** (American) 978-970-2282 91 Dutton St.

7. JIMMY JOHN'S (Sandwiches) 978-458-5858 134 Merrimack St

8. MERRIMACK ALES (Brewery) 978-701-7225 | 92 Bolt St.

9. MOONSTONES (Tapas/Raw Bar) 978-256-7777 85 Chelmsford St. Chemlsford, MA **10. OLYMPIA** (Greek) 978-452-8092 453 Market St.

11. PURPLE CARROT BREAD CO.

(Cafe, Bakery) 978-455-4188 107 Merrimack St.

12. THE KEEP

(American/Bar) 978-455-3666 111 Gorham St

13. WARP AND WEFT

(American/Bar) 978-455-6537 197 Market St.

Most of downtown Lowell's great restaurants are a five-minute walk from MRT, so you only need to park once for dinner and a show. See page 50 for more information on parking locations and rates.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Please celebrate our local community partners, who support and enrich our productions. Thank you to each of them.

Mill City Grows – Native Gardens

The Jane Austen Society of North America/ Massachusetts Region – Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley

The Michelle Canning Band/Alzheimer's Foundation of America UMass Lowell, D'Youville Live and Wellness Community – The Heath

The Luna Theatre, UMass Lowell - The Haunted Life

MILL CITY CHEESEMONGERS



-artisan cheese - specialty foods - classes/catering

at Mill No. 5 250 Jackson Street Lowell, MA (978) 364-0229 www.millcitycheese.com

Accommodations in Chelmsford-Lowell





978-256-7511

- Complimentary full, hot American style breakfast buffet
- Newly renovated roomsNewly renovated fitness center
- Newly renovated inness cer
 Seasonal outdoor pool area
- Seasonal outdoor pool area
 Shared parking lot with the
- Shared parking lot with the modern restaurant Moonstones
 Business center





978-710-3151

- Newly opened in July, 2018
 Complimentary fresh made, full American breakfast buffet
- Fitness center
- Business center
- Heated indoor pool





978-256-7511

- Full-service hotel
- Meeting spaces
- Restaurant on-site
- Fitness center
- Business center
- Heated indoor pool

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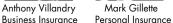


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11 ani - 4 pi



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CONCERTS IN NASHUA:

SEPT 29 | Mark & Maggie O'Connor with Symphony NH
OCT 27 | The Music of John Williams
NOV 03 | Mendelssohn's Italian Symphony
DEC 08 | An Irish Christmas
JAN 26 | Mozart & Beethoven
MAR 09 | Mozart 40 & Elgar Cello Concerto
APR 06 | Barber's Adagio & Mozart's Jupiter Symphony

For tickets and information, call 603-595-9156 or visit symphonynh.org

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134 MERRIMACK ST. ~ 978.458.5858 277 PAWTUCKET ST. ~ 978.458.6969

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

If you have any problems during a performance, please ask one of our volunteer ushers to locate the House Manager.

ACCESSIBILITY 💽 tdf 占 🦻

Open Captioning

Thanks in part to a grant and guidance from Theatre Development Fund (TDF), we will offer an open captioning performance during a Sunday matinee for all shows. Open captioning uses a text screen on the side of the stage to display simultaneous transcription of dialogue and lyrics during a live performance. When booking your seats, mention your interest in open captioning in order to secure the most advantageous view. Visit www.mrt.org for dates.

Listening Devices

Please reserve our free listening devices through the box office when you make your reservation.

Wheelchair Seating

Wheelchair space is available by notifying the Box Office when purchasing tickets. A ramp is located to the left of MRT's main entrance.

RESTROOMS/LATECOMER POLICIES

Restrooms are located in Lowell Memorial Auditorium (LMA). Follow the signs down the hallway on the left side of the theatre. Please do not go past any barriers in the LMA hallways or an alarm will sound. If at any time you leave your seat during the performance, the House Manager will seat you in the rear balcony when you return.

No one will be admitted once the performance begins. The House Manager will seat you in the rear balcony until intermission, at which time you may take your ticketed seat.

EMERGENCY CALLS

If you expect an emergency call during a performance, please leave your name and seat location with the House Manager. MRT's emergency phone number is 978-654-4678, press 9.

FIRE REGULATION

Please take a moment to locate the nearest emergency exit. If the fire alarm sounds, please remain in your seat until the House Manager directs you to the nearest exit. Do not run. Exit the theatre in a calm and orderly manner.

BAD WEATHER POLICY

MRT does not cancel performances due to bad weather except in the event of highway closure by the State

Police. If you are concerned about driving in poor weather, contact the Enterprise Bank Box Office.

COURTESY/CONCESSIONS

Please silence your cell phones, beeping watches and electronic devices when entering the theatre. Please do not text during the performance.

Refreshments are available before performances and during intermission. Food is not allowed in the theatre. Intermission beverages may be pre-purchased at the concession stand. If you bring a beverage into the theatre, please carry out the trash when you leave. Please refrain from unwrapping cellophane wrappers during the performance. For the comfort of all patrons, please avoid wearing strong perfumes, colognes, and hairsprays.

RECORDING/PHOTOGRAPH REGULATIONS

The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, either with or without flash, is strictly prohibited during the performance. EXCEPTION: You may take photos of the set before the show. If you post photos on social media, please acknowledge the designers.

PARKING

• Davidson Lot: 1-199 Davidson St. Lowell

Free parking for Subscribers and Producers Circle members only.

• Church Lot: 144 East Merrimack St. Lowell

The Immaculate Conception Church generously offers parking for free to MRT patrons when not in use by Lowell Memorial Auditorium (LMA). When in use by LMA, you must pay a fee to park. Visit lowellauditorium. com for LMA's schedule.

Garage Parking

Garage parking is available for \$5 with validation provided at MRT Concession Stand at:

- Lower Locks Parking Garage: 90 Warren St. Lowell
- John St. Parking Garage: 75 John St. Lowell

Street Parking

Street parking for evening and weekend performances is available first-come, first-served. MRT is not responsible for parking tickets or tows.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Discounts may not be

used in combination

GROUPS & DISCOUNT

• Students: \$15 any performance.

• **Groups:** Discounts are available for groups of six or more. For more information, call 978-654-7561.

• Lowell Night: Second Thursday night performance of each run for Lowell residents. Restricted seating. Purchase in person, \$10 each (cash only), at the Box Office three hours prior to curtain. Must show ID. Limit two per person.

• **Military:** MRT is a proud member of the Blue Star Theatre program and offers all active duty, veteran, or retired military personnel \$10 off on up to four tickets per production. Use the code MIL when ordering online or call 978-654-4678. MRT also offers 50% tickets for military personnel for our special Military Day performance of each show -4 pm of the second Saturday performance.

• Educators: Take 50% off up to four tickets for Educators Day – the 4 pm performance of the second Saturday of each show.

• **\$5** First Preview Night: Wednesday evening preview. Restricted seating. Purchase in person (cash only) at the Box Office three hours prior to curtain. Limit two per person.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Enterprise Bank Box Office/ Nancy L. Donahue Theatre 50 East Merrimack Street Lowell, MA 01852-1205 Phone: 978-654-4678, press 1 Fax: 978-654-7575 Email: box office@mrt.org

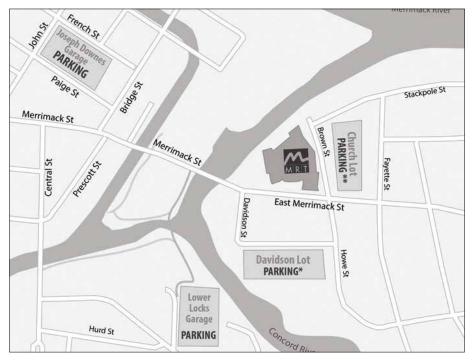
Enterprise Bank Box Office Hours

Tuesday – Saturday: 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm *Open through curtain on performance nights.* Sunday: 12:00 pm through curtain on performance nights. *Closed on non-performance nights.*

Order online: mrt.org

Subscriber ticket exchange by email: box_office@mrt.org

Administrative Offices/Mailing Address 132 Warren Street Lowell, MA 01852-2208 Phone: 978-654-7550 Fax: 978-654-7575 Email: info@mrt.org





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The UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center has it all.



The UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center located in the heart of historic downtown Lowell, features over 120 seasonal hotel rooms, 31 year-round inn-style rooms, and offers over 15,000 sq.ft. of indoor and outdoor function space.

Our grand ballroom is one of the largest in the surrounding area, and is customizable to accommodate up to 450 guests.

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- Meetings
- Conferences
- Weddings
 Social Events
 Casual Dining
- Plenty of Convenient On-site Parking

fifty warren lounge

is open 7 days a week, from 4:30pm to 10pm. Enjoy crafted cocktails and pub favorites. It's the perfect spot to grab a bite before sporting events and shows!





50 Warren St | Lowell, MA | 978.934.6920 www.uml.edu/icc