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The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley
The Lowell Offering



The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley
The Lowell Offering

## FROM BONNIE J. BUTKAS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Welcome to *Cambodian Rock Band*, a play with music that defies categorization. The *LA Times* captured it best, calling the show a "fierce, gorgeous, heartwarming, comedic fairy tale." This is a play that engages, entertains, and enriches our community; a play that strengthens our efforts to reflect our community on stage.

Former Artistic Director Sean Daniels had his eye on *Cambodian Rock Band* for over a year. He would mention it in our season planning meetings and email us with updates. It's an expensive play that we could not afford to do on our own—six actor-musicians, a sound system, projectors, and additional staff. When we had the opportunity to partner with two of our peer theatres to make it happen, we said yes.

This is former Artistic Director Sean Daniels' legacy—he knew where we needed to go and found ways to get us there. During the interview process for the next artistic director, several candidates noted that MRT is at the midpoint of our journey creating remarkable new plays. Our next artistic director will lead us into the next chapter of this adventure. Together, we will bring you stories that fill you with joy, make your heart ache, and sometimes leave you disoriented; we will take risks and sometimes fail; and we will always do what it takes to bring you the best.

Thank you for joining us on this adventure. Stay tuned for our announcement of our newly named Nancy L. Donahue Artistic Director.

As we near the end of the calendar year, please think about supporting MRT with a donation. A show like Cambodian Rock Band is important for so many reasons, but it stretches our resources. Tickets and subscriptions cover less than half of our production costs, and your generosity takes us the rest of the way.

Thank you.

Bonnie J. Butkas Executive Director

## FROM TERRY BERLINER, INTERIM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Some very exciting news and some history...

The Merrimack Repertory Theatre production of *Cambodian Rock Band* is a coproduction with Victory Gardens Theatre in Chicago and City Theatre in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In March of 2019, *Cambodian Rock Band* began its rehearsals in Chicago and opened there in April. The next stop for *Cambodian Rock Band* was in September and early October in Pennsylvania. And, now in mid-October and the beginning of November of 2019, the MRT audiences get to witness this extraordinary piece.

A co-production sounds like what it is. Fundamentally we are sharing relevant art that matters to each of our communities, and we are sharing the costs of this production with our partners, so that we can all afford to bring work like this to life.

You know that making new work takes a significant amount of development to get it right. By uniting resources with our like-minded partners across the country, we strengthen our League of Resident Theatres (LORT Theatres like MRT), and we create a robust theatre community that extends well beyond the state lines of Massachusetts.

Everyone benefits. And, most importantly, you benefit.

Cambodian Rock Band takes us into the vibrant pre 1978 world of Cambodia when music was the soul of the country. We meet the artists as they create their work and live full free lives. Then we travel through time to 1978 Cambodia when "all the rules have changed." We witness what happens when a government reigns down and takes life as we know it away. Everything from a song to a pair of eyeglasses has been stripped from daily life. Children become a commodity owned by the government. Food and health care are non-existent. An innocent person can be arrested because of "suspicious behavior" and ordered to prison without due process. Intellectualism is frowned upon, and human life is inconsequential.

We witness all of this in *Cambodian Rock Band*. And, we witness the power of song. We witness hope for a brighter future when generations yet unborn will find their freedom and voice because of the music played.

What a gift is *Cambodian Rock Band*. It shines a light on the unthinkable and reminds us how fragile it all is and how strong we all are.

With love and deepest respect for all who have suffered the cruelties of oppression, we at MRT are solemnly with you, support you, and are determined to create a safe haven for everyone.

Interim Artistic Director

Terry Berline

Interim Artistic Director

"WELCOME. THIS IS A DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE, ACCEPTING AND SAFE SPACE."

## INTERVIEW: Playwright Lauren Yee



In preparation for our **EXPLORE:** Cambodian Rock Band event, Marketing Associate Justin Scarelli conducted an interview via Skype with Playwright Lauren Yee. Here are a few excerpts. You can find the full interview on www.mrt.org or Facebook.

### On the play's resonance during the current political climate

"I think that every play that's good enough should be able to stand on its own, that if you write a story that's rich enough no matter what time period you're in, the emotions and the themes are going to resonate – a little differently, but strongly – no matter what. I do think right now it's a particular joy and privilege to be able to present you the story of a father who is an immigrant in the present day. It's a story about a Cambodian-

American family. You have a daughter character, who had never been to Cambodia growing up and didn't really know about her history and her past, and this is her chance to discover who she is and something about her father. I thinks it's a joy to be able to share that story . . . joy and warmth. If there are certain resonances for the time we are in now, I think that's great, but it's not always the goal."

### On the importance of the songs in the play

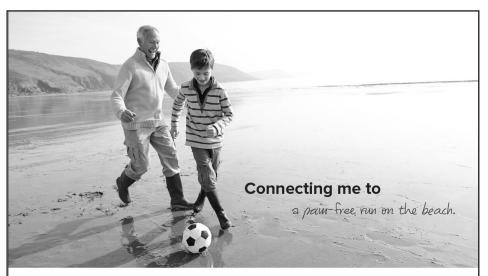
"I think it's kind of incredible to hear the music, and I think we rarely think of what our parents were like before they had kids. We kind of always think life started, their life started, when we were born, and that's not true. So to be able to tell the story of a father, who had a deep connection with this music before she was born, before the Khmer Rouge, I think really shows the ways in which music can unlock memory – that you can hear a song you grew up listening to ... that something is going to take you back and help unlock certain memories. Sometimes that can be painful but a lot of the time, that can be really cathartic."

On what she hopes the audience will take away from the experience "I want any audience, no matter who they are, to fall in love with this music. I want them to think about their relationships with their family – their parents, their grandparents – and think about the ways in which they're able to identify with these characters. I think it would be great if they were curious about what happened in Cambodia and how their own country was complicit in the fall out of all that."



(l-r) Matthew Yee, Peter Sipla, Aja Wiltshire, Eileen Doan, Greg Watanabe. Photo courtesy of Victory Gardens Theater





The Orthopedic Center at Lowell General Hospital has leading orthopedic specialists and surgeons specializing in a full array of minimally invasive procedures for bone, muscle and total joint replacement surgery.

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Lowell General Hospita BlueDistinction. Center+

Lowell General Hospital BlueDistinction. Center+



**BONNIE J. BUTKAS** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



### **TERRY BERLINER**

INTERIM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE PRESENTS WITH VICTORY GARDENS THEATER AND CITY THEATRE COMPANY

## CAMBODIAN ROCK BAND

### **LAUREN YEE**

**FEATURING SONGS BY** 

### DENGUE FEVER

**STARRING** 

**EILEEN DOAN** ALBERT PARK

PETER SIPLA

CHRISTOPHER THOMAS POW

**GREG WATANABE** AJA WILTSHIRE

SCENIC DESIGNER

YU SHIBAGAKI

SOUND DESIGNER

MIKHAII FISKFI 1

FIGHT DIRECTOR

MATT HAWKINS

COSTUME DESIGNER

IZUMI INABA ^

MUSIC DIRECTOR

MATT MACNFILY

STAGE MANAGER

**BECCA FREIFELD** 

LIGHTING DESIGNER KEITH PARHAM

**DRAMATURG** 

SKYLFR GRAY

**PRODUCER** 

PETER CREWE

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

HANNAH TODD

DIRECTED BY

MARTI LYONS

## October 16 - November 10, 2019

Actors and Stage Managers appear courtesy of Actors' Equity Association 
+Member of Stage Director and Choreographers Society Amember of United Scenic Artists, Local 829 
Cambodian Rock Band is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH Cambodian Rock Band was commissioned and first produced by South Coast Repertory with support from the Time Warner Foundation

The play is a recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New American Play Award Developed with Support from the Ground Floor at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Berkeley, CA



## **Creating Vibrant Communities**

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### CAST

Pou	Eileen Doan
Duch	Albert Park
Ted	Christopher Thomas Pow
Rom	Peter Sipla
Chum	Greg Watanabe
Neary	Aja Wiltshire

### ADDITIONAL CREATIVE STAFF

Associate Lighting Designer	Megan Turnquist
Associate Sound Designer	Joseph Palermo
Fight Captain	Peter Sipla
Music Captain	Eileen Doan
Live Audio Engineer	Bekah Rudinec
Audio Technician	Marc Weaver
Projection Technician	Elizabeth L. Gove

Special thanks to:

Our friends at MIT Music and Theater Arts

### TIME AND PLACE

Phnom Penh, Cambodia (April 2008), outer Phnom Penh, Cambodia (April 1978), and Phnom Penh (April 1975) during the new year celebration.

Approximately two hours plus one 15-minute intermission.

### MUSIC

"Uku" "Family Business" "One Thousand Tears of a Tarantula" "Cement Slippers" "Sni Bong" "Tooth and Nail" all written by Dengue Fever.

All Dengue Fever songs administered by Ellipsis Music Corp. (ASCAP) and Pentagon Lipservices (BMI) on behalf of

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 SWOP SONGS • TROLL UNDER THE BRIDGE Dengue Fever music and information are available from http://denguefevermusic.com

"The limes They Are A-Changin" Written by Bob Dylan

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JEAS CYCLO by Yol Aularong; TODAY I LEARNT TO DRINK, OLD POT STILL COOKS GOOD RICE, and I'M SIXTEEN by Voy Ho/Ros Serey Sothea; and CHAMPA

and I'M SIXTEEN by Voy Ho/Ros Serey Sothea; and CHAMPA
BATTAMBANG by Sinn Sisamouth.

All used by arrangement with Minky Records, Inc. Additional Arrangements by Matthew MacNelly and Jane Lui.



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Tel: 978 454 6200

Email: Vkong@washingtonsavings.com.

In celebration of CMAA's 35th Anniversary, we are having a separate year-round fundraising campaign. The fund raised will support the continuity of CMAA service in the community. Visit www.cmaalowell.org/wp/cmaa-35th-anniversary-campaign/ to make an impact today!

Thank you to our invaluable Community Partner, Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association. Please support their 35th Anniversary Gala. www.cmaalowell.org

### WHO'S WHO



EILEEN DOAN (Pou)

Regional: Cambodian Rock Band (Victory Gardens Theatre, City Theatre, Merrimack Repertory Theatre); Anytown, New Kid (George Street Playhouse); Unto These Hills (Mountainside

Theatre); Starstruck, Hair (University of Kentucky); Jeff The Monster (University of Central Lancashire). Music: Gently, A Matter of Time, Many the Miles, One Of You on Spotify, iTunes, etc. eileendoan.com @eileeneileend.



**ALBERT PARK** (Duch) is ecstatic for his debut at Merrimack Repertory Theatre! Regional and select credits: Cambodian Rock Band (City Theatre Company); Where the Mountain Meets

the Moon (South Coast Repertory); Yoga Play (MOXIE Theatre); Vietgone (East West Players. LA Drama Critics Circle Award Nominee. Stage Scene LA Awardee); Soul Fire (Playwrights Project); The Car Plays 2018 (Moving Arts/Segerstrom Center for the Arts); The Oldest Boy (San Diego Repertory Theatre); All's Well That Ends Well (The Old Globe); Jade Heart (MOXIE Theatre); The Winter's Tale (The Old Globe); The Car Plays 2012 (Moving Arts/La Jolla Playhouse, Craig Noel Awardee); Extraordinary Chambers (Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company, Craig Noel Award Nominee); The Odd Couple (North Coast Repertory Theatre); A Man, His Wife, and His Hat (MOXIE Theatre); Golden Child (Chinese Pirate Productions); Lend Me a Tenor (North Coast Repertory Theatre); Flower Drum Song (SDAART/La Jolla Playhouse); Yellow Face (Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company); BFE (SDAART/La Jolla Playhouse). Albert is grateful to Merrimack Repertory Theatre, Jenny, Felix, Henry, and his newborn daughter, Coral.



**CHRISTOPHER THOMAS POW**(*Ted*) is absolutely thrilled to be performing in Cambodian Rock Band at Merrimack Repertory Theater following its runs at Victory

Theatre in Pittsburgh. Previous credits include Nathaniel/Marcade in Love's Labour's Lost; Macduff u/s in Macbeth, Posthumus/Cloten u/s in Cymbeline (Great River Shakespeare Festival); Ross u/s and Lennox u/s in Short Shakes! Macbeth (Chicago Shakespeare Theater); Nakatomi u/s in Yippee Ki-Yay: Merry Christmas (Yippee Productions LLC); Little John/The Sheriff u/s in Robin Hood (Adventure Stage Chicago); and Temple u/s in *Franklinland* (Jackalope Theatre). He also appeared as Hank Barry in Silk Road Rising's staged reading of A Great Migration by Preston Choi and voiced Jeff Balasco in Evil Kitten Production's audio drama The Continuing Adventures of John Blade: Super Spy by Kyle Encinas. Christopher Thomas Pow is represented by Shirley Hamilton Talent Representation.



PETER SIPLA (Rom) is thrilled to debut at

Merrimack Repertory Theatre He was most recently seen in Cambodian Rock Band in Pittsburgh at City Theatre and in Chicago at Victory Gardens Theatre. Other credits include

Phra Alack in *The King and I* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Henry in South Pacific (Drury Lane Theatre); Don Pedro in Much Ado About Nothing (Oak Park Festival Theatre); Short Shakes!: Romeo and Juliet and Passion (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), Newsies and City of Angels (The Marriott Theatre), Wizard of Oz and Miss Saigon (Paramount Theatre), and work with TimeLine Theatre, Writers' Theatre, First Folio Theatre, Porchlight Music Theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, Brightside Theatre, Red Tape Theatre, Steel Beam Theatre, and Disney Cruise Line. Television credits include Hundley in Chicago Fire. He is a proud member of Actor's Equity and a proud North Central College alum. Peter has recorded voiceovers for hundreds of commercials and industrials. @petersipla www.petersipla.com



**GREG WATANABE** (Chum) Greg recently made his Broadway debut in Allegiance. Off-Broadway credits: The Ballad of Yachiyo (The Public) and Golden Child

WHO'S WHO

(Signature Theater). Recent appearances include the West coast premiere of Allegiance (East West Players-Japanese American Community Cultural Center), Hold These Truths (Perseverance Theater, New Century Theater), Caught (Artists Repertory Theatre), The Language Archive (Portland Playhouse), Exit the King (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey), and A Single Shard (People's Light). Other regional credits include the world premiere productions of The Summer Moon (A Contemporary Theater), The Happy Ones (South Coast Repertory Theater, L.A. Drama Critics Circle nomination. Best Featured Performance), and Extraordinary Chambers (Geffen Playhouse, Ovation nomination, Best Featured Actor). Others favorites include Yellow Face (Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company, San Diego Theater Critics Circle nomination, Outstanding Lead Performance in a Play), No-No Boy (adapted by Ken Narasaki). Greg is a member of the 18 Mighty Mountain Warriors, an Asian American comedy troupe.

### AJA WILTSHIRE

(Neary/Sothea) is so excited to bring CRB to MRT. Credits: Pirates of Penzance and HMS Pinafore (Hypocrites & Olney Theatre Center), Cambodian Rock Band (City Theatre). Chicago

credits: Cambodian Rock Band (Victory Gardens); Aristophanesathon, Cinderella at the Theatre of Potatoes (Hypocrites); Merrily We Roll Along (Porchlight Music Theatre); Little Fish (Kokandy Productions); Hookman (Steep Theatre); Spring Awakening (Griffin Theatre); The Wedding Singer (Haven Theatre); Closer, Next Fall, and The Lyons (AstonRep). Aja is represented by Stewart Talent.

LAUREN YEE (Playwright) is a playwright born and raised in San Francisco. She currently lives in New York City. Her play Cambodian Rock Band, with music by Dengue Fever, premiered at South Coast Rep and is at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival this season, followed by La Jolla Playhouse, Victory Gardens, City Theatre, and Merrimack Repertory Theatre. Her play The Great Leap has been produced at the Denver Center, Seattle Repertory, Atlantic Theatre, and the Guthrie, with future productions at Arts Club and InterAct Theatre. Also upcoming: The Song of

Summer at Trinity Rep. Lauren Yee's play King of the Yees premiered at The Goodman Theatre and Center Theatre Group, followed by productions at ACT Theatre, Canada's National Arts Centre, and Baltimore Center Stage. Other plays include Ching Chong Chinaman (Pan Asian, Mu Performing Arts), The Hatmaker's Wife (Playwrights Realm, Moxie, PlayPenn), Hookman (Encore, Company One), In a Word (SF Playhouse, Cleveland Public, Strawdog), Samsara (Victory Gardens, O'Neill Conference, Bay Area Playwrights Festival), and *The Tiger Among Us* (MAP Fund, Mu). She was a Dramatists Guild fellow, a Mac-Dowell fellow, a MAP Fund grantee, a member of The Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group, a Time Warner Fellow at the Women's Project Playwrights Lab, the Shank playwright-in-residence at Second Stage Theatre, a Playwrights' Center Core Writer, and the Page One resident playwright at Playwrights Realm. She is the winner of the Horton Foote Prize, the Kesselring Prize, and the Francesca Primus Prize. She has been a finalist for the Edward M. Kennedy Prize. the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, the ATCA/ Steinberg Award, the Jerome Fellowship, the PONY Fellowship, the Princess Grace Award, the Sundance Theatre Lab, the Wasserstein Prize. Her play The Hatmaker's Wife was an Outer Critics Circle nominee for the John Gassner Award for best play by a new American playwright. Her work is published by Samuel French. Her plays were the #1 and #2 plays on the 2017 Kilroys List. Lauren is a member of the Ma-Yi Theatre Writers Lab, a 2018/2019 Hodder fellow at Princeton University's Lewis Center for the Arts, and a New Dramatists playwright (class of 2025). She is currently under commission from the Geffen Playhouse, La Jolla Playhouse, Lincoln Center Theatre/LCT3, Mixed Blood Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Second Stage Theatre, South Coast Rep, and Trinity Rep. She has written for MIXTAPE (Netflix). BA: Yale. MFA: UCSD.

MARTI LYONS (Director) Marti is thrilled to be at Merrimack Repertory with Cambodian Rock Band by Lauren Yee as part of this wonderful co-production between Merrimack. City Theatre in Pittsburgh, and Victory Gardens Theatre. Marti most recently directed Witch by Jen Silverman at the.

### WHO'S WHO

Geffen Playhouse in LA. Marti also directed the world premiere of Witch at Writers Theatre in Chicago last season. This past year Marti also directed How to Defend Yourself by Lily Padilla for the 2019 Humana Festival as part of a co-world premiere with Victory Gardens Theater in Chicago, where Marti will direct the play again in 2020. Marti has directed Botticelli in the Fire by Jordan Tannahill (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company); The Wolves by Sarah DeLappe and Kings by Sarah Burgess (Studio Theater); Guess Who's Coming to Dinner (Court Theatre); Short Shakes! Macbeth and Short Shakes! Romeo and Juliet (Chicago Shakespeare Theater), Title and Deed by Will Eno (Lookingglass Theatre Company), The Merry Wives of Windsor and Twelfth Night (Montana Shakespeare), Wondrous Strange by Meg Miroshnik, Jiehae Park and Martyna Majok for the 2015 Humana Festival (Actors Theatre of Louisville). Mine and Bethany by Laura Marks (The Gift Theatre), Prowess by Ike Holter (Jackalope Theatre) Give it all Back by Calamity West, 9 Circles by Bill Cain, and Maria/Stuart by Jason Grote (Sideshow Theatre). This season Marti will direct The Niceties by Eleanor Burgess (Writers Theatre), How to Defend Yourself by Lily Padilla (Victory Gardens Theatre), Jen Silverman's The Moors (A Red Orchid Theatre), and the world premiere of The Scarlet Letter by Kate Hamill (South Coast Repertory). Marti is an ensemble member with The Gift Theatre, an Artistic Associate with Sideshow Theatre, and a proud member of SDC. For more information: martilyons.com.

YU SHIBAGAKI (Scenic Designer) is a Chicago and NYC based set designer, born and raised in Japan. Recent credits include The Brother Size (Steppenwolf Theatre), Cambodian Rock Band (Victory Gardens and City Theatre Company), Pride and Prejudice (Heritage Theater Festival), Fun Home, Mojada, Appropriate (Victory Gardens Theater); Witch, Vietgone (Writers Theatre); Mansfield Park (Northlight Theatre); The Father (Remy Bumppo Theatre); and more. Upcoming productions are Her Honor Jane Byrne (Lookingglass Theatre), How to Defend Yourself (Victory Gardens Theatre) and School Girls (Goodman Theatre).

IZUMI INABA (Costume Designer) is originally from Tokyo, Japan, and currently based in Chicago. Recent Chicago: Twilight Bowl (The Goodman Theatre); A Doll's House, Part Two, We Are Proud To Present... (Steppenwolf); Cambodian Rock Band, If I Forget (Victory Gardens); A Doll's House (Writers); The Mother of the Maid (Northlight). Regional: Milwaukee Rep, Repertory Theatre at St. Louis, Baltimore Center Stage, Kirk Douglas Theatre. Awards and Exhibitions: Jeff Awards, USITT, Prague Quardrennial (2019). Izumi is a resident artist at Albany Park Theater Project and holds MFA in Stage Design from Northwestern University.

KEITH PARHAM (Lighting Designer) BROADWAY: Therese Raquin (Roundabout Theatre Company). OFF-BROADWAY: Man from Nebraska (Second Stage Theatre) The Purple Lights of Joppa Illinois, Between Riverside and Crazy (Atlantic Theater Company); Tribes, Red Light Winter (Barrow Street Theatre); Stop the Virgens (Karen O at St. Ann's Warehouse/ Sydney Opera House); Ivanov, Three Sisters (CSC); A Minister's Wife (Lincoln Center Theatre) ; Adding Machine A Musical (Minetta Lane). REGIONAL: Father Comes Home From the Wars. The Wolves, Uncle Vanya (Goodman Theatre); All My Sons, The Hard Problem, Blues for an Alabama Sky, Man in the Ring (Court Theatre); The Way the Mountain Moved (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Wild Goose Dreams (La Jolla Playhouse); Carousel (Arena Stage); TUTA Company Member: The Edge of Our Bodies, Gentle, Music Hall, The Anyway Cabaret, The Jewels, The Silent Language.

WIKHAIL FISKEL (Sound Designer) Victory Gardens Theater: Rightlynd, Lettie, Native Gardens, Wonder in My Soul, Oedipus El Rey, Mojada; Cambodian Rock Band (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); This Flat Earth, The Treasurer, A Life (Playwrights Horizons); King of the Yees (Center Theatre Group, Goodman Theatre); The Wolves (Studio Theatre, Goodman Theatre); The Old Man and the Old Moon (Writers Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, New Victory, City Theatre, and The Old Globe); Mary Stuart, Book of Joseph, SS! Romeo and Juliet (Chicago

WHO'S WHO

Shakespeare Theater); Witch, Buried Child, The Hunter and The Bear (Writers Theatre); The Undertaking (The Civilians/Brooklyn Academy of Music); Seize The King, Tiger Style (La Jolla Playhouse); Learning Curve (Albany Park Theater Project/Third Pail Projects; We are only Alive a very short amount of time, Lady in Denmark, The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window, 2666, Venus in Furs, Buzzer (Goodman Theatre); The World of Extreme Happiness (Goodman Theatre, Manhattan Theater Club).

MATT MACNELLY (Music Director) is a musician and actor living in Los Angeles. Music direction: Cambodian Rock Band (South Coast Repertory, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse). Original music: This might be the end (The Trip); Our Town (La Jolla Playhouse); In Search of Duende (UNESCO World Theater Festival, Peru). Acting: Glengarry Glen Ross (La Jolla Playhouse); Time Sensitive (Guthrie Theater); Woyzeck (Ensemble Theater Company); Lysistrata (Synetic Theater); Fourteen Flights (New York Fringe Festival); Much Ado about Nothing (Folger Theatre); F\*king A (Studio Theatre). Film: Minor Turbulence, lady-like, The War Inside. TV: Rizzoli and Isles. Education: MFA in Acting, UC San Diego; BA in Theatre and Performance, Georgetown University. www.matthewmacnelly.com

MATT HAWKINS (Fight Director) is a Chicago based director, actor, fight choreographer and movement director. He has been nominated for thirteen Jeff Awards and has received five. He holds a BFA in acting from Southern Methodist University and an MFA in directing from The University of Iowa. He is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Notre Dame, where he serves as Creative Producer of the New Works Lab and Head of Musical Theatre for the Department of Film, Television, and Theatre. He is married to actor/director/playwright Stacy Stoltz.

HANNAH TODD (Associate Director) Hannah Todd is a director based in Chicago, where she has directed at the Apollo Theater (Thrones! A Musical Parody), assistant directed at Northlight Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, and Chicago Shakespeare Theater. She is a Stakeholder with the Back Room

Shakespeare Project. In Washington, DC. Hannah co-founded We Happy Few Productions, where she has directed *Hamlet*, *The Tempest*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Dog in the Manger*, and *Macbeth*. Also in DC, Hannah assistant directed at Folger Theater, Shakespeare Theatre Company, and Studio Theatre, and directed for Theater Alliance, Capital Fringe Festival, Source Festival, and Lean & Hungry Theatre. Hannah holds a BA from Hampshire College and an MFA in Directing from Northwestern University.

MEGAN TURNQUIST (Associate Lighting Designer) Megan Turnquist is a Chicago based designer. Chicagoland credits include Eclipsed (Pegasus Players); Christmas Carol, Arc Trials (Mudlark); Myths and Hymns, Veronica's Room (Bohemian Theatre Ensemble); Antigone, Julius Caesar (Wheaton College); Rosencrantz and Guildenstern... (Promethean Theatre Ensemble). Regional credits include Guys and Dolls, Macbeth, A Midsummer Nights Dream (Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre). Regional assistant work includes Oregon Shakespeare Festival and San Francisco Opera. Megan has an MFA in lighting design from Purdue University.

JOSEPH PALERMO (Associate Sound Designer) Joseph Palermo is a Chicago based Sound Designer and Digital Technologist who is quite pleased to be here for your listening pleasure. He's been recognized at the Cannes Film Festival, the Chicago Merrit Awards, and University of Glasgow for excellence in Design and Design Concepts. He just completed his second summer season at The Cape Playhouse as the Resident Sound Designer and Audio Engineer and is preparing to embark into his fifth season designing The Polar Express with Warner Brothers and Amtrak. His most recent creative obsessions include recording things in an underwater environment and applying the concepts of Quantum Physics to composition. Joseph is a proud member of the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association.

**BECCA FREIFELD** (Production Stage Manager) is thrilled to return to Merrimack Rep

### WHO'S WHO

after stage managing last season's delightful Slow Food. Area stage management credits include Cloud 9 (The Nora Theatre Co. @ Central Square Theater); the regional premiere of Cardboard Jews Walk into a War, Man of La Mancha, Oleanna, Thurgood (original run & on tour), Fiddler on the Roof, and Good (New Repertory Theatre); Dancing at Lughnasa (Gloucester Stage Co.); Every Brilliant Thing (SpeakEasy Stage Company); Barbecue (Lyric Stage Company of Boston); Shoes On, Shoes Off (Brandeis Department of Theater Arts); and Romeo & Juliet and Evil Dead: the Musical (Arts After Hours); among others. Ms. Freifeld was a Stage Management intern at Merrimack Rep during the 2010-11 season and is delighted to return as a member of Actors' Equity Association.

**PETER CREWE** (Producer) **MRT:** Producer: Tiny Beautiful Things, The Haunted Life, The Heath, 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 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.

For 25 years, Terry has been a freelance director based in New York City. Her work has been seen on Broadway and Off, in regio nal theatres, and universities across the country. Passionate about new work, and the houses that build it, she is thrilled to join MRT. This past season she wrote and directed a new holiday musical for Vanguard, directed the TDF Gala honoring Graciela Daniele, Reggie Van Lee, and Bob Mackie, directed a developmental reading of *Dream*, a new musical based on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and directed the first developmental reading of the new Frank Wildhorn, Rinne Groff and Robin Lerner musical *The Song of Bernadette*. Terry



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### WHO'S WHO

has served as Artistic Director for LeAp Onstage (a playwriting program in NYC), Artistic Director for North Shore Summer Theater, and Interim Artistic Director for Maui Onstage. She has written for American Theatre magazine, Asolo Rep (season program), Theatre Bay Area, Theatre History Studies, and participated in the CAP21 Writers Residency and the Rhinebeck Writers Retreat. Her new musical Alone in the U.S. (written with Bobby Cronin), has been presented at CAP21, New York Film Academy, Penn State, University of Cumbria, and won the Outstanding Program of the Year Award at Marymount Manhattan College. For 5 years, Terry served as a member of Off Broadway's Lucille Lortel nominating committee. She is a core faculty member at Peridance Capezio Center in New York City, a member of the Dramatists Guild, and the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

### MERRIMACK REPERTORY THEATRE

Merrimack Repertory Theatre (MRT) celebrates 41 years this season as the Merrimack Valley's professional theatre. With a steadfast commitment to new plays, MRT annually produces seven works, including several premieres.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Bonnie J. Butkas and Interim Artistic Director Terry Berliner, MRT strives to fulfill its mission "to create remarkable new and contemporary plays that bring joy to our art form while engaging, entertaining and enriching our community." The non-profit company guarantees that shows are accessible to audiences of all incomes; partners with businesses and other non-profits to fully engage the community; and contributes to the economic vitality of Lowell by attracting diverse audiences from throughout the region.

Recent acclaimed productions include *Miss Bennet:* Christmas at Pemberley, the bestselling production in MRT history (directed by former Artistic Director Sean Daniels); Daniels' own autobiographical play, The White Chip, which opened in New York in October; I and You (Off-Broadway transfer) and Silent Sky by Lauren Gunderson, the most produced playwright in America; Women in Jeopardy! and the world premiere of Slow Food by Wendy MacLeod (both directed by Daniels); KNYUM by Cambodian playwright and actor

Vichet Chum; and *The Lion*, singer-songwriter Benjamin Scheuer's award-winning musical memoir (also directed by Daniels), which launched its national tour from MRT in August 2015, following critically acclaimed runs in New York and London.



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 Scenic, 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.



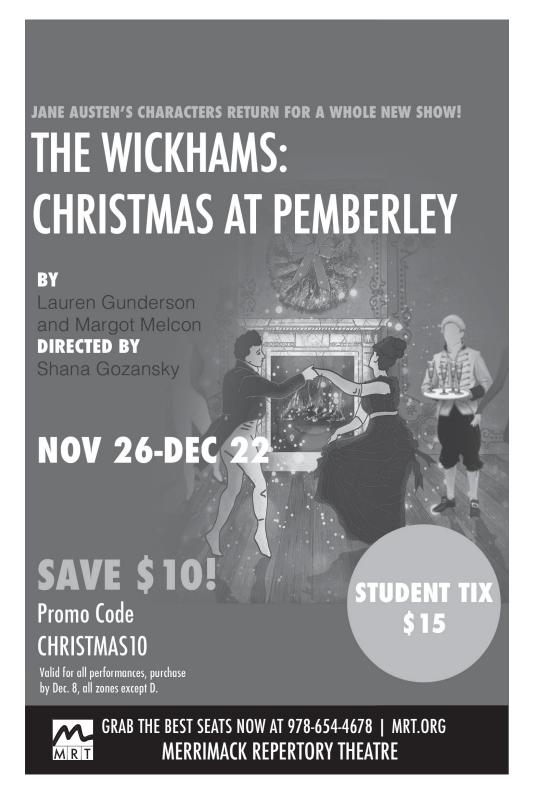
Merrimack Repertory Theatre operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), a consortium if regional theatres throughout the nation, and AEA (Actors Equity Association), SDC (Stage Directors and Choreographers Society), and USA (United Scenic Artists).







Follow the conversations: #CRBMRT



## LOCAL CHORUS AUDITIONS FOR The Lowell Offering

MRT will hold auditions November 16 for a nonsinging chorus of community members for the upcoming production of *The Lowell Offering* by Andy Bayiates and Genevra Gallo-Bayiates. The theatre seeks a total of 24 individuals, who will perform in two 12-person groups. Details at MRT.ORG.



### KAREN MACDONALD TO STAR AS ERMA

Critically acclaimed Boston actress Karen MacDonald (Home of the Brave, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? at MRT) will star as America's favorite, and funniest,

mom in *Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End* from April 22 to May 17, 2020. MRT's Interim Artistic Director, Terry Berliner, will direct.



Thank you to all who attended our **Explore:** Cambodian Rock Band event, especially to our partners CMAA - Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (Executive Director Sovanna Pouv, bottom left), the Boston Asian American Film Festival, Professor George Chigas (Cultural Studies, UMASS-Lowell, top left), musicians Seng Ty, Sang Orn Oum, and Sang Eng Oum (in photo at top right), and playwright Lauren Yee (bottom right).



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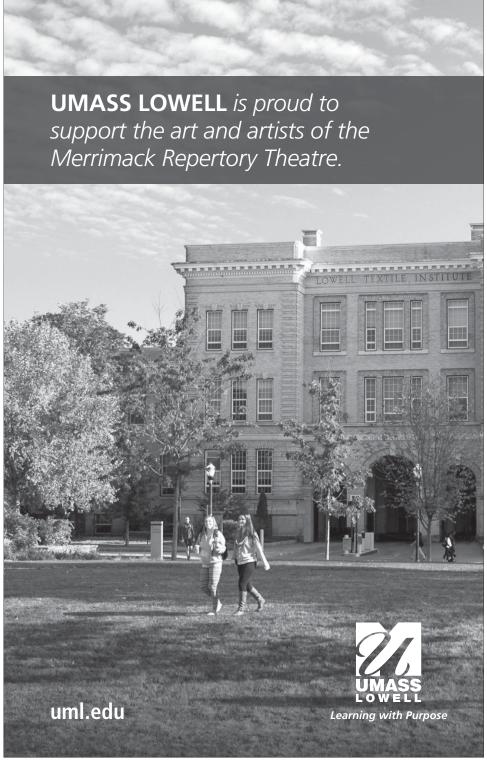
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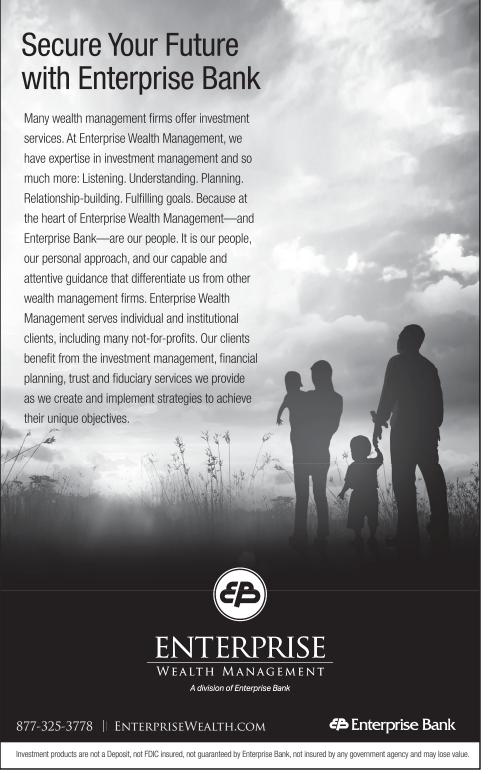
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Bonnie J. Butkas, Executive Director at 978-654-7558 or bonnie.butkas@mrt.org.

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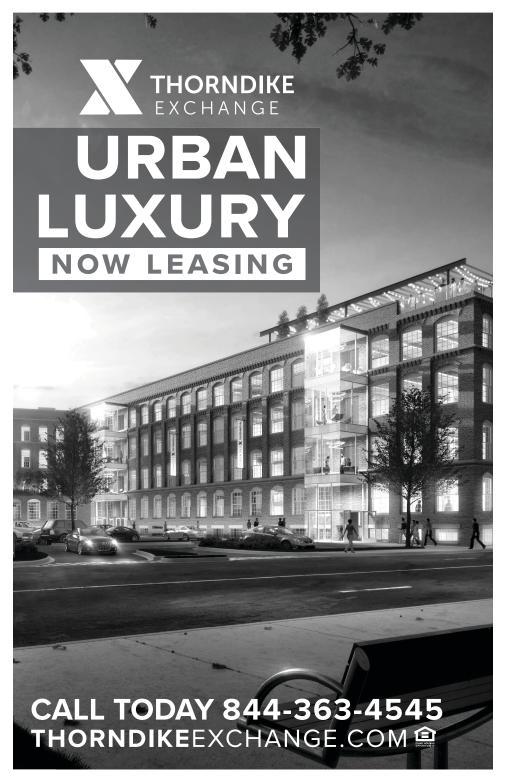
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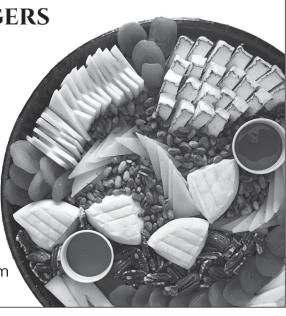




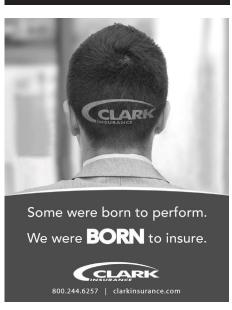
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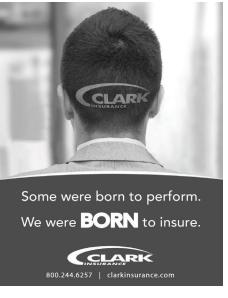




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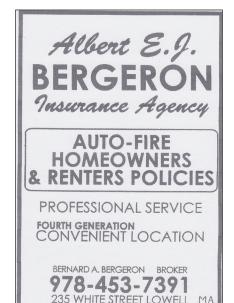
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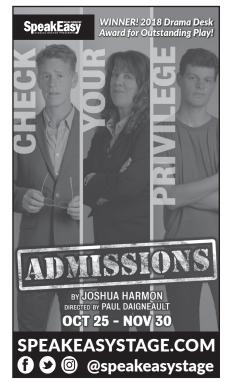
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Most of downtown Lowell's great restaurants are a five-minute walk from MRT, so you only need to park once for dinner and a show. See page 53 for more information on parking locations and rates.

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Support MRT and arts in the community!

Every two months, Warp & Weft offers their wooden ceiling to a local non-profit, where patrons can donate to the non-profit by tossing bills at the ceiling. This time around, donations will go towards MRT. How does it stick? You'll have to come in to Warp and Weft and give it a try!







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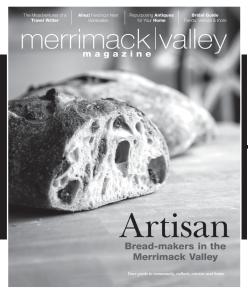
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### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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

### ACCESSIBILITY oc toff & 9

### **Open Captioning**

Thanks in part to a grant and guidance from Theatre Development Fund (TDF), we offer open captioning performance during a Sunday matinee for all shows. When booking your seats, mention open captioning in order to secure the best view. Visit www.mrt.org for dates.

### **Listening Devices**

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

### **Large-Print Programs**

We provide a portion of our programs in large print. See concessions for a free copy.

### 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.

### COURTESY/CONCESSIONS

Please turn off 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.

### **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.

### RESTROOMS/LATECOMER POLICIES

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.

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 or an alarm will sound.

### 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.

### **BAD WEATHER POLICY**

MRT does not cancel performances due to bad weather. If you are concerned about driving in poor weather, contact the Enterprise Bank Box Office.

### 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

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132 Warren Street Lowell, MA 01852-2208 Phone: 978-654-7550

Fax: 978-654-7575 Email: info@mrt.org

### **PARKING**

### FREE PARKING FOR SUBSCRIBERS AND PRODUCERS CIRCLE MEMBERS ONLY

### • Davidson Lot: 1-199 Davidson Street, 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.

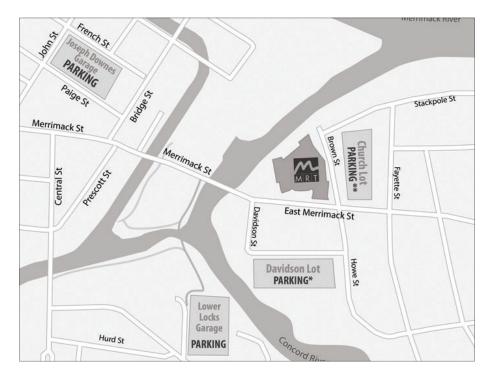
### Garage Parking

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.





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