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Contact: Roman Black, Marketing Director

(727) 823-1600 x 202

<mailto:rblack@americanstage.org>

ST. PETERSBURG, FL – American Stage Theatre Company announces its 2015-2016 season for its six Mainstage productions along with their annual American Stage in the Park production. For their 15-16 season, American Stage offers a diverse collection of stories featuring female playwrights, Tampa Bay area premieres, Tony Award-winning plays, one musical, the 9th installment of the August Wilson Century Cycle, a play based on an Alfred Hitchcock classic and a production by the Tony Award-winning writer of *Billy Elliot*. **Their 2015-2016 season will be a season of awakenings!**

The Interim Artistic Director, Meg Heimstead said this about their upcoming season and the thought process that went into the selections, “For our 2015-2016 season, I wanted to explore epic stories of love, sacrifice, discovery, joy, connection, and ultimately, of awakening. This collection features two exciting and highly lauded female playwrights, as well as culturally diverse plays, thus reflecting the range of perspectives that inform the American experience today. This season highlights the importance of providing a platform for all creative voices and sharing multiple viewpoints on what it means to be human with our audience.”

The season opens with **INTIMATE APPAREL** by the Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, Lynn Nottage, and explores the struggle between taking the path society has chosen or staying true to oneself. During the holidays, they will present **THE 39 STEPS**, a comedic blend of Hitchcock masterpiece and spy novel delivered with fast paced hilarity. They kick-off the New Year with their 9th installment in August Wilson’s Century Cycle, **JITNEY**, followed by the funny and heartwarming, **4000 MILES** by Amy Herzog. In April of 2016, American Stage in the Park continues the outdoor tradition with Monty Python’s **SPAMALOT**, the Tony Award-winning musical. Summer of 2016 will see **A TALE OF TWO CITIES**, a one man comedic tour-de-force and the **THE PITMEN PAINTERS**, by the Tony Award-winning writer of *Billy Elliot*, Lee Hall.

In conjunction with their 2015-2016 announcement, American Stage will be offering **a savings up to 27% off single tickets with a Mainstage Subscription** (excludes FLEXpasses) for their **6 & 5 play packages**. **Subscriptions will go on sale to the public on January 23, 2015**. This offer is based on availability and should be ordered early to guarantee the best seats before single tickets go on sale. They also provide a FLEXpass product which is 6 flexible tickets that patrons can use whenever or however they want. Plus, loyal subscribers get to enjoy the following benefits; huge savings over single tickets, best seats guaranteed, discounts on additional single tickets, unlimited free tickets exchange, lost ticket insurance, our free e-newsletters, discounted tickets to LEARN Lecture events, and a subscriber rewards program card where they will be able to enjoy discounts with our hospitality partners.

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**FOLLOWING IS THE DETAILED LIST OF
AMERICAN STAGE 2015-2016 SEASON PRODUCTIONS**

Tampa Bay Area Premiere

INTIMATE APPAREL

By Lynn Nottage

September 16 – October 11, 2015

Winner of the Outer Critics Circle Award for “Outstanding Off-Broadway Play”

“...thoughtful, affecting...The play offers poignant commentary on an era when the cut and color of one’s dress—and of course, skin—determined whom one could and could not marry, sleep with, even talk to in public.” — Variety

New York, 1905: Esther, a proud and shy African-American seamstress creates exquisite lingerie for both Fifth Avenue boudoirs and tenderloin bordellos. Yearning for a different life, Esther embarks on a journey to find love, discovering unexpected friendships that defy race, class and religion along the way. Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, Lynn Nottage, weaves a beautiful tale of vulnerability and strength, as Esther struggles between the path society has chosen or staying true to herself.

THE 39 STEPS

Adapted by Patrick Barlow

Based on the book by John Buchan

From the movie by Alfred Hitchcock

November 18 – December 13, 2015

2008 Tony Award Nomination for “Best Play”

2008 Drama Desk Award for “Unique Theatrical Experience”

2007 London’s Laurence Olivier Award for “Best New Comedy”

“Once this fun ride leaves the station, you don’t want to get off!” – New York Daily News

“Absurdly enjoyable, gleefully theatrical...a perfect soufflé.” –The New York Times

Mix a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, add a dash of Monty Python, and you have *The 39 Steps*. Winner of two Tony and Drama Desk Awards and London’s Olivier Award for Best New Comedy, *The 39 Steps* is packed with laughs, thrills and over 150 unique characters (and only four actors!) The madness begins when ordinary Richard Hannay’s night at the theatre devolves into a dead woman in his lap. Hurling into a complex web of murder, espionage, and flirtatious encounters, Hannay careens from a one riotously hilarious moment to the next, to clear his name and find the true killer. *The 39 Steps* amounts to an unforgettable evening of pure pleasure! **Perfect for all ages.**

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The 9th Installment in our Century Cycle

JITNEY

By August Wilson

January 20 – February 21, 2016

Winner of the New York Drama Critics Award for “Best New Play”

Winner of the Outer Critics Circle Award for “Outstanding Off Broadway Play”

"Explosive... Crackles with theatrical energy." - *New York Daily News*

"Thoroughly engrossing, *Jitney* holds us in charmed captivity." - *New York Times*

"Comic, soulful and immensely moving." - *Time Out*

Set against a backdrop of urban renewal in 1977 Pittsburgh, *Jitney* tells the story of a makeshift, unlicensed taxi dispatch business that has served the African-American community for years. Becker, the jitney station owner, navigates emotional conflicts as he prepares for his son to return home after serving a 20 year prison term for murder. Tensions erupt and unfulfilled desires are expressed inside the jitney station as Becker and the others struggle to find hope and connection despite the failures and disappointments of the past.

Jitney is the first play August Wilson wrote in his renowned “Pittsburgh Cycle” which chronicles the African American experience, decade by decade, during the 20th Century. *Jitney* is the seventh work in the ten play “cycle”. **Contains adult language and themes.**

4000 MILES

By Amy Herzog

March 16 – April 10, 2016

2013 Pulitzer Prize Finalist for Drama

Winner of the 2012 Obie Award for “Best New Play”

Winner of the 2012 *New York Times* Outstanding Playwright Award

Winner of the 2012 *Time Magazine*'s #1 Play or Musical

"A funny, moving, altogether wonderful drama. . . A heartening reminder that a keen focus on life's small moments can pay off in a big way onstage." - *The New York Times*

"Herzog's....humor, honesty and narrative subtlety make this a rarity: a family play that avoids sentimentality or sitcom shtick" - *Time Magazine*

Called “The best play of 2012” by *TIME* magazine, this funny and heartwarming drama looks at how two outsiders find their way in the world today. After suffering a major loss, 21 year-old Leo arrives unannounced at his 91 year-old Grandmother Vera’s West Village apartment in the middle of the night, seeking a place to rest after his cross-country bicycle journey. Over a single month, these unlikely roommates infuriate, bewilder, and ultimately reach each other. This Pulitzer Prize finalist is a stirring reminder of what separates generations and what has the power to bring them together. **Contains adult language and themes.**

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American Stage in the Park

MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT

Book & Lyrics by Eric Idle

Music by John Du Prez & Eric Idle

A new musical lovingly ripped off from the motion picture "Monty Python and the Holy Grail"

From the original screenplay by Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, Michael Palin

April 13 – May 8, 2016 (GALA is on April 15)

Winner of the 2005 Tony Award for "Best Musical"

Winner of the 2005 Outer Critics Circle Award for "Best Musical"

"A no-holds-barred smash hit!" - The New Yorker

"...Taunting French guards, Knights Who Say Ni, a despondent prince, poor peasants and killer rabbits. They are all familiar to fans of the film, but you don't have to know a thing about Monty Python to get the jokes." – Herald Tribune

Winner of the 2005 Tony Award for Best Musical, Monty Python's *Spamalot* is the outrageously funny parody of the legend of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. *Spamalot* features a bevy of beautiful show girls and hilarious dance numbers, not to mention flying cows, killer rabbits and French people. With book and lyrics by Monty Python alum, Eric Idle, and a musical score by John Du Prez and Eric Idle; *Spamalot* "raises silliness to an art form! (*NY Sunday Times*)."

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Adapted from Charles Dickens by Everett Quinton

June 1 – June 26, 2016

Winner of the Obie Award for "Best Performance by an Actor"

"It's full-to-overflowing with high-camp sensibility and more than a few literary references as Jerry's transformation from wastrel to self-sacrificing hero is complemented by his transformation from mere mortal to an absolute queen." – Sacramento News and Review

Everett Quinton's *A Tale of Two Cities* is a one-man comedic tour-de-force rendition of Dickens' romantic novel, in which one actor plays everyone from Sydney Carton to Madame Defarge! An aspiring drag queen named Jerry opens his door and finds a baby left on his doorstep. "He's a straight baby, but we can co-exist. I know it can be done." Jerry proceeds to tell the baby a Grimm's fairy tale, but when this fails to stop the baby's crying, he performs the entire narrative of Dickens' classic of the French revolution, playing all the characters in only 90 minutes! Mark Chambers, the actor who played Jerry on our stage twenty years ago, will reprise his role.

Contains brief partial nudity...Blink and you might miss it.

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Tampa Bay Area Premiere

THE PITMEN PAINTERS

By Lee Hall

July 20 – August 14, 2016

**From the Tony Award-winning writer of *Billy Elliot*
Winner of the 2008 Evening Standard Award for “Best Play”**

"Extraordinary for all sorts of reasons. It is a funny play that asks big questions about education, culture and the working class." – *The Guardian*

From the Tony Award-winning writer of *Billy Elliot*, comes this entertaining and thought-provoking drama of friendship, transformation and the power of individual expression. *The Pitmen Painters* is based on the triumphant true story of a group of British miners who discover a new way to express themselves and unexpectedly become art-world sensations. Captivating, funny and moving, *The Pitmen Painters* is both an exploration of the politics of art and class as well as an uplifting celebration of the creative impulse inside of us all. ***Contains brief partial nudity...Blink and you might miss it.***

Follow this link <http://www.americanstage.org/mediapage.php> to American Stage Theatre’s Media Resource Page. Photo and art credit: Chad Jacobs

Please call the **American Stage Box Office** at **(727) 823-PLAY (7529)** or go to **www.americanstage.org** for more information and to purchase tickets.

American Stage Theatre Company is located at the Raymond James Theatre, 163 3rd Street North in the heart of downtown St. Petersburg, Florida. American Stage Theatre Company is a not-for-profit professional theatre founded in 1977. The company’s mission is to create the most satisfying live theatre in the Tampa Bay area, accessible to all members of the community. Their vision is to preserve the greatest human stories from our past, while creating the most defining stories and storytelling of our time. American Stage presents its Mainstage Productions in their 182-seat Raymond James Theatre. The theatre’s other programming includes: American Stage in the Park, “After Hours” Series, Educational programming includes Acting Camps and Classes for youth and adults. The Hough Family Foundation is the Season Sponsor, Raymond James is the Mainstage Sponsor, Tampa Bay Times is the Newspaper Media Sponsor, WEDU is the Media Sponsor and WUSF 89.7 is the Radio Sponsor of American Stage.

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