

 COLUMBIA STAGES

INÉS BRAUN • ROBIN A. ERIKSEN
PÁLÍNA JÓNSDÓTTIR • RORY MCGREGOR
ARI RODRIGUEZ • MATT TRUCANO

MFA
DIRECTORS
2017

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THE **ARTS | THEATRE**

THE OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II CENTER FOR THEATRE STUDIES

PHOTO CREDIT: MATTHEW DUNIVAN PHOTOGRAPHY
FEATURED (LEFT TO RIGHT): INÉS BRAUN,
ROBIN A. ERIKSEN, PÁLÍNA JÓNSDÓTTIR,
RORY MCGREGOR, ARI RODRIGUEZ, MATT TRUCANO



A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF DIRECTING

I am delighted to introduce you to six talented young directors who are completing their third and final year of graduate training in stage direction in the Theatre Program at Columbia University School of the Arts. In their final year, the directors create a fully produced show in a Manhattan venue. These thesis productions represent an opportunity for you to experience their final projects at Columbia before they embark into the greater theatre world. What unites the six productions is the directors' shared love for the theatre as a vital art form. I know that you will find their work as courageous, theatrical and necessary as I do. May I introduce you to Inés Braun, Robin A. Eriksen, Pálína Jónsdóttir, Rory McGregor, Ari Rodriguez, and Matt Trucano. I am proud of each and every one.

Anne Bogart

INÉS BRAUN

Inés Braun is a theatre and film director from Buenos Aires. Her feature film *La Ronda* was selected to participate in Berlin and Shanghai International Film Festivals, amongst others. She moved to New York in 2014 and since then theatre has become her home. Her directing credits include *Ivanov*, *Eurydice*, and *Trial by Fire*, an ensemble-devised piece about Joan of Arc and Brecht's female collaborators. Inés is interested in staging stories about passionate women who struggle with their own ghosts and the roles society demands them to fulfill. She recently worked with Robert Woodruff and Martha Clarke.



ALKESTIS

BY EURIPIDES, TRANSLATED BY
ANNE CARSON
DIRECTED BY INÉS BRAUN
FEBRUARY 15-18

In this tragic-romantic-melodramatic-satiric fairy tale, Apollo convinces the Fates to allow the condemned King Admetos to find a substitute to die in his place. No one seems willing to do it, apart from his loving wife, Alkestis. Euripides' first extant play explores the aftermath of a king's selfish decision and the fatal ramifications of his action.

EURYDICE
PHOTO CREDIT: KEVIN McNAIR
FEATURED: MARINA SHAY



SUMMERTIME

BY CHARLES L. MEE

DIRECTED BY ROBIN A. ERIKSEN

OCTOBER 19-22

Meet 13 people. All different, all the same. Each trying to grasp that slippery bar of soap called love. Assumptions are confronted by others' realities as everyone faces the question: "How does love work?" With the backdrop of a nostalgic and dreamlike summer-time day, each character ponders if their idea of love is too simple or too complex. As they search, one by one, they discover they may not know how love works at all. Do you think you do?

THE PLAY OF THE UNKNOWN ISLAND

PHOTO CREDIT: KELLY STUART

FEATURED: SHARVARI DESHPANDE,
MICHAEL ANTHONY WALSH



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ROBIN A. ERIKSEN

Robin A. Eriksen's theatre is never one thing – it's art in combination. Raised in Norway and trained in the US, he understands theatre as a place to combine different impulses, elements and people. He has assisted some of the most esteemed directors in Norway and America, most recently Jostein Kirkeby-Garstad and Brian Kulick. Robin's professional experience ranges from small comedic plays to large-scale musicals, always leading his actors to a style where realistic ease meets a mastered showmanship. Whether he's approaching classical works with a contemporary eye, or exploring new works through the lens of tradition, he hopes to create theatre that transmits profound ideas through accessible entertainment.



PÁLÍNA JÓNSDÓTTIR

Pálína Jónsdóttir is a director and performer of original, contemporary and classic theatre. Her directing credits at Columbia University include: *A Dream Play*, *The Seven Deadly Sins* and *The Three Sisters*. Her original works include her award-winning *Völva* at the National Theatre in Iceland, *The Sea-Mare* for HVCCA in NY and *The Secret Face* at HERE Arts Center. She collaborated on *Still Life with Commentator* for The Next Wave BAM Festival and *Landscapes with Argonauts* for Schiller Tage Festival. In Opera she recently worked with Robert Lepage at the Met and assistant directed *Mata Hari* for the Prototype Festival. Pálína lives and works in NYC and Reykjavik.

BABETTE'S FEAST

BY KAREN BLIXEN
ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY
PÁLÍNA JÓNSDÓTTIR
MARCH 8-11

Babette's Feast is a new stage adaptation by Pálína Jónsdóttir of the eponymous story by Karen Blixen. *Babette's Feast* tells the compelling story of Babette, a famous French chef in exile, who cooks an extraordinary gastronomic feast for members of a remote religious community. The narrative is the culmination of the artist's calling to go the distance and the aspiration to inspire change in our society with the work that we do.

A DREAM PLAY
PHOTO CREDIT: UGLA HAUKSDÓTTIR
FEATURED: BRODERICK BALLANTYNE,
PATRICK CHICO, GREGORY HERMANN,
ANNELISE NIELSEN, MACY IDZAKOVICH



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MACBETH

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

DIRECTED BY RORY MCGREGOR

APRIL 19-22

Macbeth clung to sanity through keeping his vicious actions on the battlefield and his home life controlled and separate. With the bloody murder of Duncan, these two worlds collide and send Macbeth and his Lady spiraling into a world of violence and terror as they desperately try to keep a hold of the crown. This iconic story is taken and used to explore our society's troubling relationship towards violence.

THE GREAT DIVIDE

PHOTO CREDIT: GRAEME BRAIDWOOD

FEATURED: JOSH COLLINS, HANNAH GENESIUS,
MICHAEL KIERSEY, MIZTLI ROSE NEVILLE



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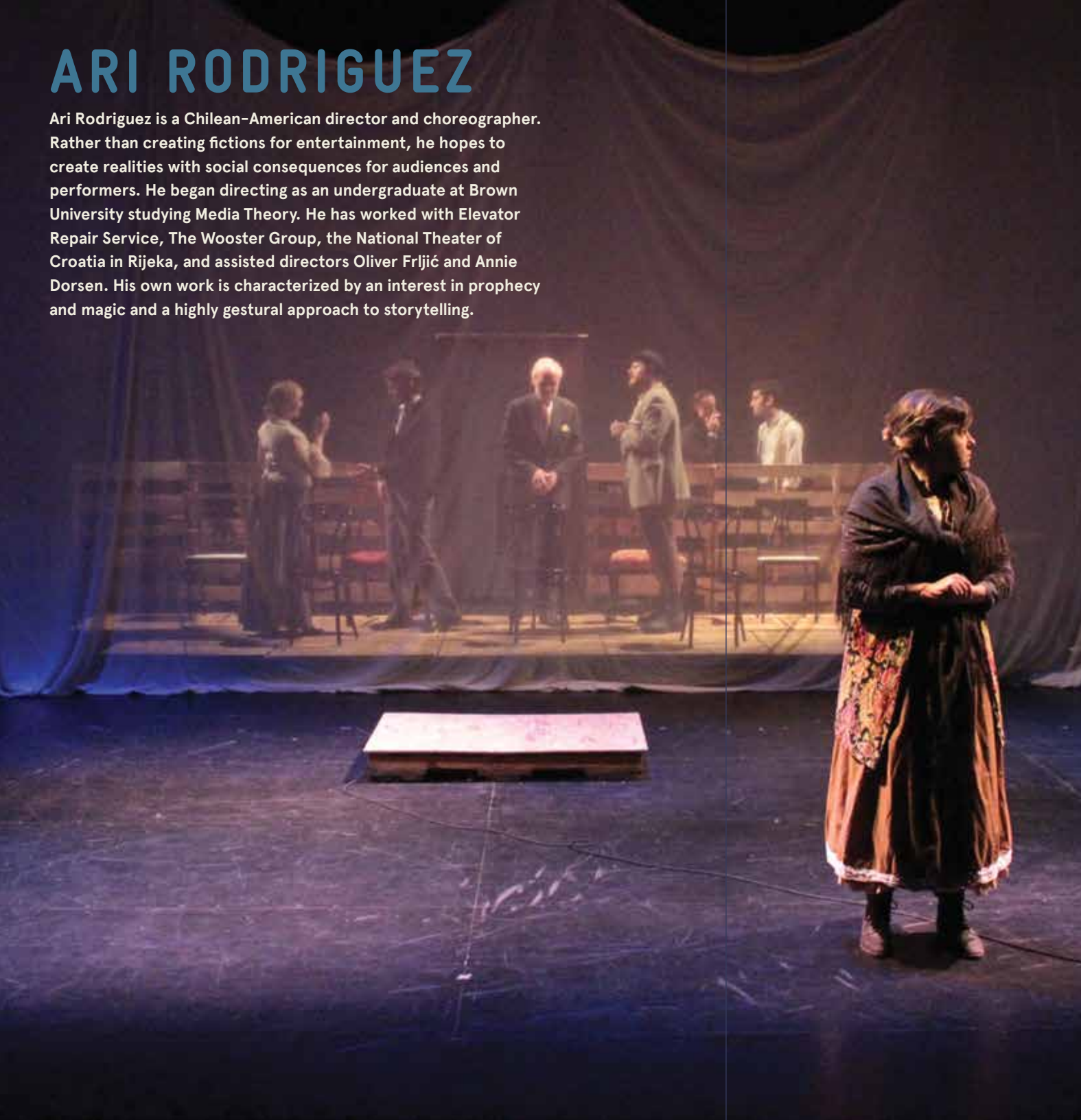


RORY MCGREGOR

Rory McGregor is a British theatre director based in New York City. He is currently the Artistic Apprentice at Roundabout Theatre, and was previously Artistic Associate at Classic Stage Company. He is also a Directing Mentor at Playwrights Horizons Theatre School. Rory has directed plays around the UK including *The Greenville Ghost* (Theatre503 and C Venues, Edinburgh Festival), *Contrast* and *God of Carnage* (both at the Edinburgh Festival). He most recently directed the world premiere of *The Great Divide* at the Finborough Theatre in London.

ARI RODRIGUEZ

Ari Rodriguez is a Chilean-American director and choreographer. Rather than creating fictions for entertainment, he hopes to create realities with social consequences for audiences and performers. He began directing as an undergraduate at Brown University studying Media Theory. He has worked with Elevator Repair Service, The Wooster Group, the National Theater of Croatia in Rijeka, and assisted directors Oliver Frljić and Annie Dorsen. His own work is characterized by an interest in prophecy and magic and a highly gestural approach to storytelling.



HAIR

BY GALT MACDERMOT, GEROME RAGNI
AND JAMES RADO

DIRECTED BY ARI RODRIGUEZ

MARCH 29-APRIL 1

Fifty years after the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, age is catching up with the hippie generation and their legacy. With a cast of Baby Boomers bravely depicting the days of their youths, we ask questions about the real and imaginary aspects of our American cultural memory. In a deeply relevant and bizarrely fun reimagining of *Hair* we ask the people who actually remember the Vietnam War and the counterculture of the sixties to reflect on an entire life lived in an ever-changing America.

THE SEAGULL

PHOTO CREDIT: HADLEY MUELLER

FEATURED: LISA MARIE NEWTON



CAMINO REAL

BY TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

DIRECTED BY MATT TRUCANO

JANUARY 25-28

In equal parts romance, farce, satire, and pagan ritual, *Camino Real* sketches a dreamscape of the lonely heart, a space for critical self-reflection and possible spiritual redemption. Tennessee's richly textured imagery envelops the audience in a reverberating pageant of physical, emotional, and psychic landscapes which morph as in a dream: shockingly, kaleidoscopically, and inevitably. Williams warns, "The people in my play are romantics confronted by very real situations as they come to the end of the road. It is a real road."

THE GLASS PIANO BY ALIX SOBLER

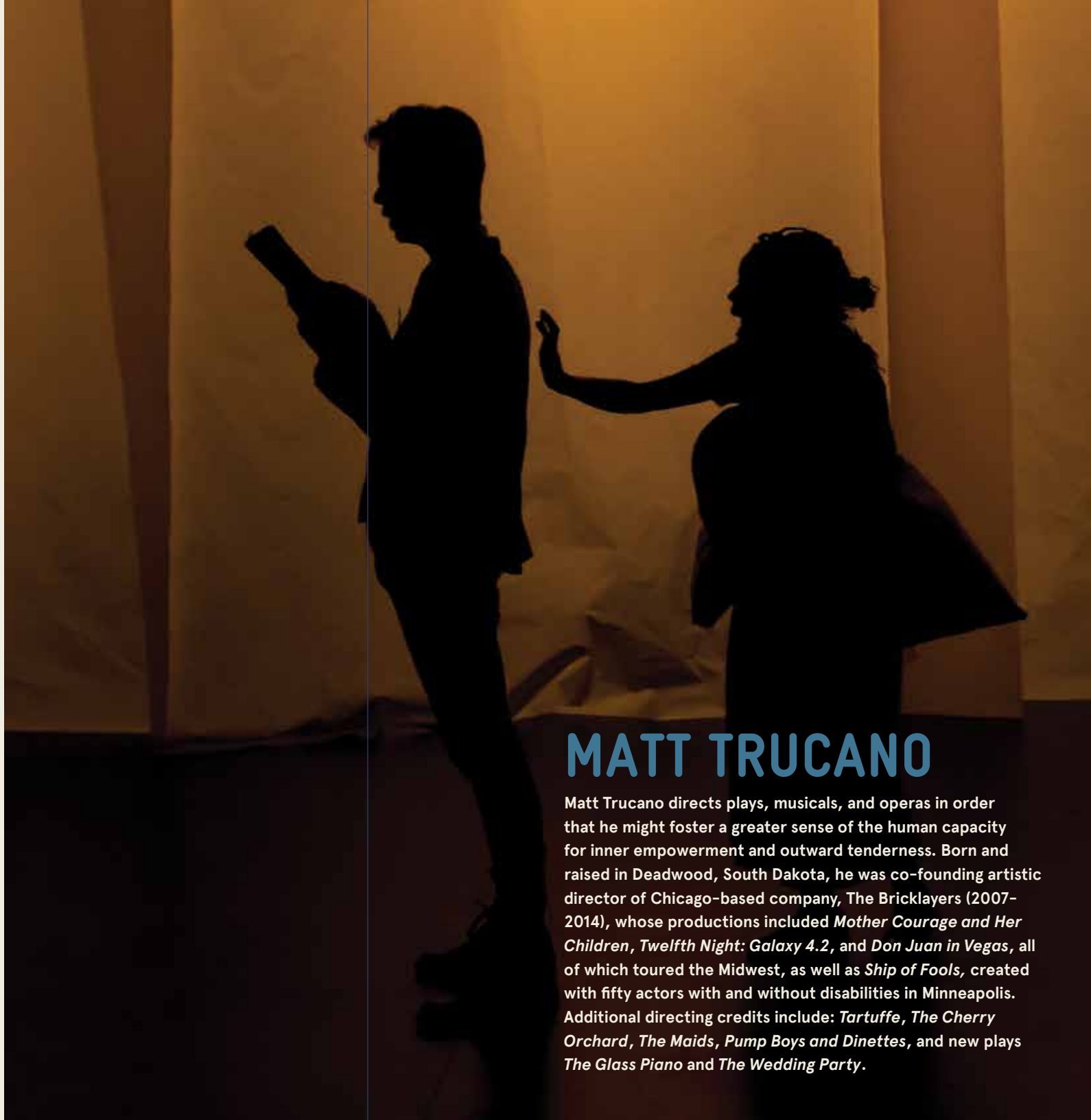
PHOTO CREDIT: KELLY STUART

FEATURED: MATT RENSKERS &

JESSICA-BRITTANY SMITH



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MATT TRUCANO

Matt Trucano directs plays, musicals, and operas in order that he might foster a greater sense of the human capacity for inner empowerment and outward tenderness. Born and raised in Deadwood, South Dakota, he was co-founding artistic director of Chicago-based company, The Bricklayers (2007-2014), whose productions included *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *Twelfth Night: Galaxy 4.2*, and *Don Juan in Vegas*, all of which toured the Midwest, as well as *Ship of Fools*, created with fifty actors with and without disabilities in Minneapolis. Additional directing credits include: *Tartuffe*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Maids*, *Pump Boys and Dinettes*, and new plays *The Glass Piano* and *The Wedding Party*.

CALENDAR

SUMMERTIME

By Charles L. Mee

Directed by

Robin A. Eriksen

October 19-22

Schapiro Theater

CAMINO REAL

By Tennessee Williams

Directed by

Matt Trucano

Jan 25-28

The Connelly Theater

ALKESTIS

By Euripides

Translated by

Anne Carson

Directed by

Inés Braun

Feb 15-18

The Connelly Theater

BABETTE'S FEAST

Adapted by

Pálína Jónsdóttir

From the story by

Karen Blixen

Directed by

Pálína Jónsdóttir

March 8-11

The Connelly Theater

HAIR

By Galt MacDermot,

Gerome Ragni and

James Rado

Directed by

Ari Rodriguez

March 29-April 1

The Connelly Theater

MACBETH

By William

Shakespeare

Directed by

Rory McGregor

April 19-22

The Connelly Theater

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The MFA Theatre Program at Columbia is international, collaborative and interdisciplinary. Named in honor of Oscar Hammerstein II, it is defined by its location in New York City, a global capital of theatre, and by the extensive network of Columbia alumni who run prestigious Broadway, Off-Broadway and regional theatres; direct and perform in Tony- and other award-winning productions; work in every level of the professional theatre world; and teach, mentor and engage with students on an ongoing basis. Columbia Stages is the producing arm of the Oscar Hammerstein II Center for Theatre Studies.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Columbia University School of the Arts awards the Master of Fine Arts degree in Film, Theatre, Visual Arts and Writing and the Master of Arts degree in Film Studies; it also offers an interdisciplinary program in Sound Arts. The School is a thriving, diverse community of talented, visionary and committed artists from around the world and a faculty comprised of acclaimed and internationally renowned artists, film, theatre and television directors, writers of poetry, fiction and nonfiction, playwrights, producers, critics and scholars. In 2015, the School marked the 50th Anniversary of its founding. In 2017, the School will open the Lenfest Center of the Arts, a multi-arts venue designed as a hub for the presentation and creation of art across disciplines on the University's new Manhattanville campus. The Lenfest will host exhibitions, performances, screenings, symposia, readings, and lectures that present new, global voices and perspectives, as well as an exciting, publicly accessible home for Columbia's Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery. For more information visit arts.columbia.edu.

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