

# MILWAUKEE REPERTORY THEATER

## ANNOUNCES 2019/20 SEASON

### *The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season of Artistic Director Mark Clements*

February 4, 2019 at 8pm CT– [Milwaukee] – **Artistic Director Mark Clements** and **Executive Director Chad Bauman** are thrilled to announce [Milwaukee Repertory Theater's](#) 2019/20 Season, which celebrates the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season of Artistic Director Mark Clements with 15 productions across four venues in the **Patty & Jay Baker Theater Complex**.

The 2019/20 Season features

- One of the most beloved musicals of all time – ***West Side Story***
- Two world premieres including *Antonio's Song: Dreaming of a Son* by **Dael Orlandersmith** and **Antonio Edwards Suarez** and *Hootenanny: The Musicale* by **David M. Lutken**
- ***Hedwig and the Angry Inch***, the first musical ever produced in the Stiemke Studio
- Revival of a Rep classic, ***The Nerd*** by Larry Shue
- Contemporary rising star playwrights **Eleanor Burgess, Danai Gurira, Matthew Lopez, and Karen Zacarias**
- 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of **Reb Lab**, a short-play festival showcasing the Emerging Professional Residents

“This is my tenth season with Milwaukee Rep and in that time I’ve directed countless productions, implemented a new mission, started a family, became a US citizen, but most importantly I’ve made Milwaukee my home,” said **Artistic Director Mark Clements**. “This season is full of plays deeply aligned in tolerance that add a layer of thought to how we as a community can come together in a shared experience through highly entertaining theater. It has been a true privilege to lead Milwaukee Rep these past ten years, and I look forward to continuing to serve the community by bringing an artistic vision that reflects our city’s rich diversity.”

For the 2019/20 Season, **women and ethnically diverse voices** will create 50% of the productions, and more than 50% of the **actors on stage will represent the ethnic diversity of the Milwaukee community**. Several productions in the season will transfer from The Rep to other theaters bringing the best of Milwaukee to cities all over the country.

“With 15 productions and nearly 700 performances in a 10 month span, The Rep is the most prolific performing arts organization in Milwaukee in terms of numbers,” said **Executive Director Chad Bauman**. “This season especially will push the envelope with productions that ask important questions and engage the community in a meaningful way.”

Milwaukee Repertory Theater’s 2019/20 **Quadracci Powerhouse Season** opens with the iconic American Musical ***West Side Story*** with book by **Arthur Laurents**, music by **Leonard Bernstein** and lyrics by **Stephen Sondheim**. Artistic Director **Mark Clements** directs this classic that features the most memorable score in musical theater history. Next, a Milwaukee Rep classic returns with ***The Nerd*** by **Larry Shue** (*The Foreigner*). First premiering at The Rep in 1980, *The Nerd*, directed by **JC Clementz** (*Murder for Two*) is a madcap comedy full of twists and turns. Starting 2020 is ***The Legend of Georgia McBride*** by **Matthew Lopez** (*Whipping Man, The Inheritance*) whose work has been compared to the great Tony Kushner. This hilarious and heartwarming

play centers on an Elvis impersonator turned drag queen. Next Associate Artistic Director **May Adrales** (*In the Heights*) directs ***Eclipsed***, a chilling portrait of war and sisterhood by *Black Panther* and “The Walking Dead” star **Danai Gurira**. Finishing out the Quadracci Powerhouse Season is ***Destiny of Desire***, a telenovela of passion and deception with lively music and dance by **Karen Zacarías** (*Native Gardens*), directed by **José Luis Valenzuela** (Artistic Director, Los Angeles Theatre Center).

The **Stiemke Studio Season** opens with ***The Niceties***, an intimate drama by **Eleanor Burgess** (*Chill*), directed by **Annika Boras**, that displays a polite clash of ideas that soon landslides into an explosive discussion of race, history and power between two vibrant and complex women. Up next is the first musical ever produced in the Stiemke Studio, ***Hedwig and the Angry Inch*** with text by **John Cameron Mitchell**, music and lyrics by **Stephen Trask**. Artistic Director **Mark Clements** will direct what *Time Magazine* calls the “most exciting rock score written for the theater, since, oh, ever!” Following that will be the world premiere of ***Antonio’s Song: Dreaming of a Son*** by Pulitzer Prize finalist **Dael Orlandersmith** (*Until the Flood, Yellowman*) and **Antonio Edwards Suarez**. Again directed by Artistic Director **Mark Clements**, this world premiere is a one-man play starring **Antonio Edwards Suarez** that intertwines powerful poetry, original movement, music and imagery to create a stunning exploration of an artist’s true self.

The **Stackner Cabaret Season** opens with a comedic classical music duel in ***2 Pianos 4 Hands*** by **Ted Dykstra** and **Richard Greenblatt**. Featuring the music of Bach, Beethoven, Billy Joel, Jerry Lee Lewis and more this show directed by **Laura Braza** (*Songs for Nobodies*) is entertainment with a capital E. Next up is the musical *The New York Times* calls “wacky and outrageous with a hysterical anything goes sense of fun!” ***Nonsense*** by **Dan Goggin** features the Little Sisters of Hoboken who pull out all the stops in a fundraising variety show. Following that is the revival of a Milwaukee Rep premiere ***Chasin’ Dem Blues: Untold Story of Paramount Records*** (formally titled *Grafton City Blues*) written and directed by **Kevin Ramsey** (*Fire on the Bayou*). This exuberant musical celebration of some of the greatest jazz and blues music tells the story of little known Grafton, Wisconsin’s Paramount Records the leading label for recording artists of color in the Midwest. Closing out the season is the world premiere of ***Hootenanny: The Musicale*** by Rep favorite **David M. Lutken** (*Woody Sez, Back Home Again: On the Road with John Denver*). Directed by **Sherry Lutken** and featuring the **Seat of the Pants Band**, this is a one-of-a-kind show focusing on the rich tradition of communal music-sharing.

Milwaukee Rep’s holiday tradition, ***A Christmas Carol***, will grace the Historic Pabst Theater stage for the 44<sup>th</sup> year. The **Emerging Professional Residents** (EPRs) will partake in the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of **Rep Lab**, a short play-festival that is the hottest ticket in town in April 2020 and this July 2019 **The Professional Training Institute**, a free program to a select group of talent high school students, will perform their culminating performance piece in the Stiemke studio.

**Subscriptions** are available for renewing and new Subscribers beginning **Tuesday, February 5**. Subscription prices for the 2019/20 Season range from \$95-\$567. Packages available are the Ultimate 11-play package, which includes the entire season spanning all three of The Rep’s performance spaces; Quadracci Powerhouse/Stackner 9-play package; Quadracci Powerhouse/Stiemke Studio 7-play package; Quadracci Powerhouse 5-play package; Stackner Cabaret 4-Play package as well as a Create Your Own Season package and Flex Passes. Single Tickets will go on sale later in the summer. For additional information on Subscription offerings, please contact The Rep’s Ticket Office at **414-224-9490** or visit [www.MilwaukeeRep.com](http://www.MilwaukeeRep.com).



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# Milwaukee Repertory Theater 2019/20 Season

*Programming, cast, dates, and prices are subject to change.*

## Subscription Season Productions

### ***2 Pianos 4 Hands***

By Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt

Directed by Laura Braza

**September 6 - November 3, 2019**

Stackner Cabaret

For anyone who ever dreamed big—and then didn't quite make it—comes the riotous story of two childhood friends who spent years chasing the same goal: concert pianist stardom. Two actors, two pianos, and dozens of characters grace the stage in this hilarious portrayal of pushy parents, eccentric teachers, and the triumphs and tortures of being extraordinarily good musicians. **Featuring the music of Bach, Beethoven, Billy Joel, Jerry Lee Lewis and more**, this wildly popular show not only hits all the right notes; it tickles the ivories and your funny bone too.

The Plunkett Family Foundation present

### ***West Side Story***

Based on a conception of Jerome Robbins

Book by Arthur Laurents, Music by Leonard Bernstein and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Directed by Mark Clements

**September 17 -October 27, 2019**

Quadracci Powerhouse

Corporate Sponsor: BMO Harris Bank

One musical changed theater forever and it will be making its triumphant Rep debut in a rare professional production. Two rival gangs struggle for control of their New York City neighborhood. When Tony falls for Maria, the star-crossed lovers find themselves wrenched between their worlds. This passionate adaptation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is **filled with some of the most unforgettable songs including "Maria," "Tonight," "I Feel Pretty," and "America"** telling the greatest love story ever told in this larger-than-life musical. Add dances that smolder and sizzle with energy and you have an experience you'll never forget!

### ***The Niceties***

By Eleanor Burgess

Directed by Annika Boras

**September 25 -November 3, 2019**

Stiemke Studio

In this riveting two-person drama, an ambitious young black student and her esteemed white professor meet to discuss their differing views on the college junior's paper about slavery and the American Revolution. A polite clash of ideas soon landslides into an explosive discussion of race, history, and power. **Riddled with smart dialogue, this dramatic confrontation forces us to empathize with two vibrant and complicated women.** It's an entertaining and thought-provoking nail-biter that that will have everyone talking.



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## ***Nunsense***

A Musical Comedy

Book, Music and Lyrics by Dan Goggin

**November 8, 2019 - January 12, 2020**

Stackner Cabaret

The Little Sisters of Hoboken are in dire need of emergency funds after a culinary disaster nearly wipes out the convent. The nuns pull out all the stops in a fundraising variety show featuring tap dancing, habit humor, an audience quiz and a special appearance by convent cook, Sister Julia, Child of God. The clever story has an unabashed desire to make you laugh. With songs and comic interludes paced at break-neck speed, it's a must see musical adventure!

## ***The Nerd***

By Larry Shue

Directed by JC Clementz

**November 12 - December 15, 2019**

Quadracci Powerhouse

From the much-loved playwright of *The Foreigner* comes a **new production of one of the funniest plays ever written**. When Willum has an unexpected party guest, who turns into an unwanted houseguest, he executes an elaborate plan to rid himself of the wacky nuisance. Aided by a rag-tag team that includes friends, a would-be lover and an oblivious boss, creative acts of desperation quickly dissolve into utter mayhem. The twists and turns of this madcap comedy lead to an ending that leaves you feeling happily hoodwinked!

## ***The Legend of Georgia McBride***

By Matthew Lopez

**January 14 - February 9, 2020**

Quadracci Powerhouse

Corporate Sponsor: Associated Bank

Casey is a broke Elvis impersonator with a baby on the way. When the owner of the run down bar where he works brings in a drag show to attract more customers, Casey is out of a job. Or is he? **Filled with music, humor, and plenty of sequins, this joyful, acclaimed new play is a reminder that the path to prosperity and fulfillment may sometimes take an unexpected turn.** Don't miss this hilarious and heartwarming show taking the nation by storm.

## ***Chasin' Dem Blues: Untold Story of Paramount Records***

Written and Directed by Kevin Ramsey

**January 17 - March 22, 2020**

Stackner Cabaret

This revival of a Rep premiere (previously titled *Grafton City Blues*) explores the inspiring story of Grafton, Wisconsin's, Paramount Records. A recording label that, at the height of the jazz and blues age, became for a brief, bright few years, the leading label for recording artists of color in the Midwest—and broke down small-town racial barriers along the way. **Artists such as Louis Armstrong, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Alberta Hunter**



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**and Ma Rainey all recorded there.** This exuberant musical celebration of some of the greatest jazz and blues music features four sensational quadruple threat performers guiding the journey through story and song.

Craig and Mara Swan present

### ***Hedwig and the Angry Inch***

Text by John Cameron Mitchell, Music and Lyrics by Stephen Trask

Directed by Mark Clements

**January 28 - March 8, 2020**

Stiemke Studio

Winner of four Tony Awards including Best Musical Revival, **this genre-bending musical sensation played to record-breaking sell-out crowds on Broadway telling the story of one of the most unique characters to ever hit the stage.** To walk away, you've got to leave something behind – and so Hansel Schmidt does, transforming into Hedwig. With her new identity, Hedwig escapes the iron curtain to begin life with her freshly-minted American husband. Everything seems perfect until her husband leaves. With nothing left, she returns to her first love — music. Don't miss "the best rock musical ever" (*Rolling Stone*)!

Warning: show contains explicit content

### ***Eclipsed***

By Danai Gurira

Directed by May Adrales

**March 3 - March 29, 2020**

Quadracci Powerhouse

Written by actress-playwright **Danai Gurira** (*Black Panther*, *The Walking Dead*) comes a **stunning tale of hope and resilience set in the midst of the Liberian Civil War.** Five extraordinary women, who have formed an unlikely sisterhood, struggle to negotiate power, protection and peace as they try to survive. Drawing on the reserves of wit and compassion, these defiant women ask: when the fog of battle lifts, could a different destiny emerge? Nominated for six Tony awards, including Best Play, *Eclipsed* has been called "rare and powerful" by *The New York Times* and "a must-see production" by *New York Magazine*.

### ***Hootenanny: The Musicale***

By David M. Lutken

Directed by Sherry Lutken

**March 27 - May 24, 2020**

Stackner Cabaret

A John (Jack) D. Lewis New Play Development Program production

Building on the success of his post-show, interactive hootenannies following *Woody Sez* and *Back Home Again: On The Road With John Denver*, actor-musician sensation David Lutken has created a **one-of-a-kind show focusing on the rich tradition of communal music-sharing.** Act One features David and his Seat of the Pants Band sharing stories and well-loved folk songs from around the world such as "East Virginia Blues," "Farewell, Nova Scotia," and "Eight More Miles." During Act Two, audience members can join in on their own instruments, sing along, or just sit back and enjoy the music in this groundbreaking Rep World Premiere.



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## ***Destiny of Desire***

By Karen Zacarías

Directed by José Luis Valenzuela

**April 21 - May 17, 2020**

Quadracci Powerhouse

On a stormy night in Mexico, two baby girls are born — one into a life of privilege and the other into poverty. When the newborns are swapped by a former beauty queen with an insatiable lust for power, the stage is set for outrageous misfortunes to grow into one remarkable destiny. With nods to Shakespeare and Brecht, this fast-paced comedy inspired by popular telenovelas is **filled with forbidden love, revenge, glorious music and burning passion**, making it the perfect guilty pleasure to end The Rep's 2019/20 Season.

## **OFF –SUBSCRIPTION**

### ***Subscription Add-On Productions***

**Wells Fargo presents**

*Milwaukee's Favorite Holiday Tradition*

### ***A Christmas Carol***

By Charles Dickens

Adapted by Mark Clements

**November 26 – December 24, 2019**

Pabst Theater

The Rep's hit new adaptation is a tale of love, hope and redemption with just the right blend of beautiful music, lively dancing, stunning sets and eye-popping special effects. It's a dazzling Christmas feast with enough theatrical goodies to fill any sized stocking hung by the chimney with care. **Join Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim and Scrooge in this holiday classic the whole family will love.**

### ***Antonio's Song: Dreaming of a Son***

By Dael Orlandersmith and Antonio Edwards Suarez

Directed by Mark Clements

**March 24 - April 12, 2020**

Stiemke Studio

A John (Jack) D. Lewis New Play Development Program production

*Antonio's Song* charts one artist's exploration of self. From the streets of Brooklyn to Russia's most prestigious ballet training studios, Antonio struggles to reconcile multiple ethnic identities. He wrestles with the definition of masculinity in modern America while discovering the beauty of becoming a father. Pulitzer Prize finalist **Dael Orlandersmith's** (*Until the Flood*) **powerful poetry is intermixed with stunning original movement and music and evocative projected imagery** to create a wholly unique and stunning world premiere production.

### **Professional Training Institute (PTI)**

Show – TBD

**July 18 – 21, 2019**

Stiemke Studio



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*10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

## **Rep Lab**

**April 16 – 20, 2020**

Stiemke Studio

Milwaukee Rep’s limited engagement short-play festival is back for its 10th year. See it all—drama, comedy, and everything in between—in this one-of-a-kind theatergoing experience featuring the talents of Milwaukee Rep’s Emerging Professional Residents.

### **About Milwaukee Repertory Theater**

Milwaukee Rep is the largest performing arts organization in Wisconsin in terms of audiences served and one of the largest professional theaters in the country. Each year, The Rep welcomes up to 275,000 people at nearly 700 performances of 15 productions ranging from compelling dramas, powerful classics, new plays and full-scale musicals in its three unique performance venues – the Quadracci Powerhouse, Stiemke Studio and Stackner Cabaret. Founded in 1954 by Mary Widrig John, The Rep has gained a national reputation as an incubator of new work, an agent of community change and a forward-thinking provider of vital arts education programs. Under the leadership of **Artistic Director Mark Clements** and **Executive Director Chad Bauman**, Milwaukee Repertory Theater ignites positive change in the cultural, social, and economic vitality of its community by creating world-class theater experiences that entertain, provoke, and inspire meaningful dialogue among an audience representative of Milwaukee’s rich diversity.

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