

PARK SQUARE theatre

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The 2007-08 Park Square Theatre Season: **Stepping Forward with Fresh Discoveries, Familiar Favorites, and Leading Twin Cities Talent**

Saint Paul, MN—Park Square Theatre pairs top Twin Cities talent with four area premieres and three familiar favorites for the 2007–08 season. The company’s 32nd season features a wide range of shows, from character comedy to satire, from contrasting tales of the unfathomable to classic adventure.

The area premieres include Lisa Kron’s 2006 Broadway hit *Well*, directed by Michael Bigelow Dixon in his Park Square debut; the 2004 Tony nominee *Frozen* by Bryony Lavery; Joanna McClelland Glass’s affectionate comedy *Trying*; and Stephen Dietz’s retelling of *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure*.

The season also offers three familiar favorites: John Pielmeier’s *Agnes of God*, Lanie Robertson’s *Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar & Grill*, and John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men*.

Several leading Twin Cities directors and actors return to the Park Square Theatre stage in 2007–08: Tony-nominated **Marion McClinton**, who made his professional directing debut at Park Square 26 years ago, will direct **Thomasina Petrus** in *Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar & Grill*; Guthrie veteran **Richard Ooms**, who made his Park Square debut last season in *Democracy*, returns to star in *Trying*; **Peter Moore**, who staged *You Can’t Take It With You* and *The Chosen* in recent seasons, directs *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure*; five-time Emmy Award-nominee **Linda Kelsey** stars in *Agnes of God* and *Frozen*; **Warren C. Bowles**, who directed *Constant Star*, returns to stage *Trying* and to appear on stage in *Of Mice and Men*, joined by PST veterans **Zach Curtis**, **Terry Hempleman**, **Carolyn Pool**, and **Steve Sweere**.

Several rising young talents will make their Park Square debuts this season: **Emily Gunyou** appears opposite Richard Ooms in *Trying*; **John Catron**, who received widespread acclaim for his role in *Bug* at Pillsbury House, joins **Shad Cooper**, who recently starred in *Fat Pig* with Walking Shadow, in *Of Mice and Men*.

“Park Square is taking a major step forward this season by investing significantly in the artists who will bring thrilling new work and fresh interpretations of favorite works alive for our audiences,” says Artistic Director Richard Cook.

continued

The 2007–08 Season

TRYING by Joanna McClelland Glass (Area Premiere)

September 14–October 7, 2007

Directed by Warren C. Bowles; starring Richard Ooms, Emily Gunyou

In this affectionate comedy, a bittersweet friendship emerges between aging Judge Francis Biddle and fresh-faced Sarah Schorr, the latest in a string of secretaries who is hired to help with his memoirs. This rich story of life's most inevitable adventure—growing old—is inspired by the playwright's experience with the real Judge Biddle, FDR's Attorney General and the Chief Justice of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials. *Trying* had its world premiere in 2004 at Chicago's Victory Gardens Theater before moving Off-Broadway.

AGNES OF GOD by John Pielmeier

October 19–November 11, 2007

Directed by Mary M. Finnerty (The O'Conner Girls, 2006); starring Linda Kelsey, Colleen Hennen, Alayne Hopkins

Linda Kelsey stars as The Mother Superior in this searing drama of devout and pure Sister Agnes, accused of murdering her baby, a child of whose conception and birth she has no memory. When a court appointed psychiatrist is asked to determine Agnes' sanity, a mystery unfolds, not of murder but of faith and truth.

WELL by Lisa Kron (Area Premiere)

January 18–February 10, 2008

Directed by Michael Bigelow Dixon (PST debut); starring Barbara June Patterson, Heidi Bakke, Faye Price, Edwin Strout, Emil Herrera

Originally produced by The Public Theater in New York, this twistedly funny autobiographical show landed on the "Top Ten" lists of *The New York Times*, *Associated Press* and *The Advocate*. All Lisa Kron wants to do is put on a nice, orderly little play about her family, growing up, and how she got cured of her allergies. But her mother—who's watching the play in a housedress from her onstage living room—keeps interrupting, offering snacks to the audience and telling her own versions of Lisa's story. This 2006 Broadway favorite is a hilarious, touching, and utterly original comedy for anyone who has ever had a mother.

FROZEN by Bryony Lavery (Area Premiere)

March 7–30, 2008

Directed by Jim Cada (PST directing debut); starring Linda Kelsey

This shattering psychological thriller won the 1998 Barclays Award for Best New Play in its original production in England at Birmingham Repertory Theatre. It received its critically acclaimed London premiere at the Royal National Theatre in 2002 and its Broadway premiere in 2004 at Circle in the Square Theatre, where it was nominated for a Tony for Best Play. The play connects an unlikely trio: a tattooed serial killer, a grieving mother and a psychiatrist studying the criminal mind. *Extremely strong language and dark subject matter. Not recommended for children under 15.*

continued

LADY DAY AT EMERSON'S BAR & GRILL by Lanie Robertson

April 11–May 4, 2008

Directed by Marion McClinton (Waiting for Godot, 1981); starring Thomasina Petrus

It has been 26 years since Marion McClinton made his professional directing debut at Park Square Theatre. He returns to direct this beautiful, heartbreaking musical tribute. In a seedy bar in South Philadelphia, legendary jazz singer Billie Holiday gives one of her last performances, recalling her life, from her start scrubbing steps in Baltimore through her rise to fame. McClinton was a Tony nominee for Best Direction for *King Hedley II* and the recipient of the 2000 Drama Desk Award Outstanding Director of a Play for *Jitney*. Petrus was in Park Square's *Constant Star*, named the 2006 outstanding ensemble and 2006 outstanding musical by the Star Tribune.

SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE FINAL ADVENTURE by Steven Dietz (Area Premiere)

May 30–June 22, 2008

Directed by Peter Moore (The Chosen, 2007, You Can't Take It With You, 2005)

In this leaner, more vigorous version of Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes is surrounded by all the elements that fans have come to expect: danger, intrigue, wit, humor and surprise. With his trusted companion, Doctor Watson, at his side, Holmes matches wits with his arch-nemesis, the evil Professor Moriarty, and faces a chilling mystery involving a kidnapped diva, scandalous letters and London's seamy underworld. Deitz's new play had its world premiere at Arizona Theatre Company and Pasadena Playhouse in 2006 and was honored by Mystery Writers of America with a 2007 Edgar Allan Poe Award in the Best Play category.

OF MICE AND MEN by John Steinbeck

November 29–December 16, 2007 (3-week public run with 5 weeks for young audiences)

Directed by Richard Cook; starring Warren C. Bowles, John Catron, Shad Cooper, Zach Curtis, Eric Graves, Bob Hammel, Terry Hempleman, James Noah, Carolyn Pool, and Steve Sweere

Steinbeck's towering classic tragedy set against the backdrop of the Great Depression is a poignant portrait of the flipside of the American Dream and a friendship tested to its limits. George (played by Hempleman) is a slight, shrewd and fast-talking man of the road. Lennie (played by Curtis) is built like an ox, but has the mind of a child. Drifting from ranch to ranch in 1930s California, struggling to make a living as migrant workers, they make one last tragic grab at owning their own future. This show is Park Square Theatre's fall "An Evening of Theater During the Day" offering for students throughout the region.

Season and Single Ticket Information

All performances in the 2007–08 season will be in the company's intimate theatre in the historic Hamm Building in downtown St. Paul. A variety of season subscription packages are now on sale. Single tickets are available at (651) 291-7005. Groups of 10 or more should call (651) 767-8487. Tickets can be purchased online at www.parksquaretheatre.org.

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Park Square Theatre

Presenting entertainment that matters through familiar favorites and fresh discoveries.