



**PRESS RELEASE  
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## **AURORA THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2020/2021 SEASON**

**World Premiere of *FATHER/DAUGHTER* by Kait Kerrigan**  
**Edward Albee's *THREE TALL WOMEN***  
**Toni Morrison's *THE BLUEST EYE*, adapted by Lydia R. Diamond**  
***THE ISLAND* by Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona**  
***CRY IT OUT* by Molly Smith Metzler**

**BERKELEY, CA (March 24, 2020)** Berkeley's acclaimed Aurora Theatre Company (Artistic Director **Josh Costello**) announced today the plays that will comprise the theatre's 29th season, with the first slot to be announced at a later date. In the second slot, opening November 2020, will be Lydia R. Diamond's remarkable adaptation of Toni Morrison's debut novel **THE BLUEST EYE**. Aurora kicks off the new year with a remount of Just Theatre's acclaimed production of **CRY IT OUT** by Molly Smith Metzler. The spring will feature **THE ISLAND**, the provocative drama from South African playwright Athol Fugard and co-writers John Kani and Winston Ntshona. Next is the World Premiere of Kait Kerrigan's touching tale of romance and relationships in **FATHER/DAUGHTER**. The season closes with **Edward Albee's THREE TALL WOMEN**, Albee's semi-autobiographical masterpiece.

"I'm so thrilled to present the plays that make up Aurora's 29th season," Costello said. "I've been looking forward to announcing Aurora's 29th Season for quite some time, and it's the first I've had the privilege of putting together as Artistic Director.

“From a pair of love stories to the realities of motherhood, to a Greek tragedy in a South African prison, from Toni Morrison's first novel to Edward Albee's masterpiece, these brilliant plays each speak powerfully to our world in different ways, but each features characters facing up to a challenging new reality—and deciding what they’re going to do about it.”

Costello assumed the role of Artistic Director in August 2019.

Continued Costello, “Of course I never expected we would have to delay our announcement due to a global pandemic. And now that we’re in the midst of closures and social distancing due to COVID-19, it seems odd timing indeed. But, like all of us, we are looking forward, with hope, to the passing of this crisis. We don't know how long the current closures will last, but at this point we expect our 2020-2021 Season to proceed as planned, with the announcement of our first show coming soon.”

Aurora’s regular season will run September 2020 through July 2021. In chronological order, the Aurora 2019/2020 season is as follows:

#### **TO BE ANNOUNCED**

Directed by **Josh Costello**

**September 4 - October 4, 2020 (Opens: September 10)**

#### **Toni Morrison’s THE BLUEST EYE**

By **Toni Morrison**, adapted by **Lydia R. Diamond**

Directed by **Dawn Monique Williams**

**November 6 - December 6, 2020 (Opens: November 12)**

Pulitzer Prize winner Toni Morrison’s debut novel, *The Bluest Eye* (which turns fifty this year), comes to the Aurora stage in a stunning adaptation by playwright Lydia R. Diamond (*Stick Fly*, *Smart People*). Pecola Breedlove is obsessed with Shirley Temple and a desire to have blue eyes. Claudia, another young girl and one of Pecola’s only friends, guides us through this hauntingly lyrical memory play. Diamond expertly translates to the stage the emotional depths of Black girlhood, the poisonous effects of racism, and the heartbreak of shame in Morrison’s work. Celebrated for a “profound and unrelenting vision,” Morrison sets *The Bluest Eye* in her hometown of Lorain, Ohio, and places three young Black girls—Claudia, Pecola, and Frieda—center stage as they strive to make sense of love, sisterhood, abuse, and hate.

“POIGNANT AND POETIC DRAMA.”

— *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*

## **CRY IT OUT**

By **Molly Smith-Metzler**

Directed by **Molly Aaronson-Gelb**

**January 22 - February 21, 2021 (Opens: January 28)**

Molly Smith Metzler's *Cry It Out* is a provocative yet hilariously honest look at motherhood today. Set in a part of Long Island where class lines and property lines bump up against each other, new parents Lina and Jessie form a postpartum bond over coffee and nap times. But maternity leave only lasts so long. Who is privileged enough to make which impossible choice? This deeply moving contemporary comedy highlights the power of female friendship and the impossibility of having it all. Called "urgent, uproarious and poignant" in the San Francisco Chronicle, this remount of Just Theater's critically acclaimed Bay Area Premiere features actors Martha Brigham, Justin DuPuis, Lauren English, and Lauren Spencer reprising their roles.

**"CRY IT OUT...MAKES AN URGENT, UPROARIOUS AND POIGNANT CASE FOR NO LONGER CONSIGNING THE UNVARNISHED TRUTHS OF MOTHERHOOD TO WHISPERS IN MOTHERS' CIRCLES...FIRST-RATE PERFORMANCES."**

— *San Francisco Chronicle*

## **THE ISLAND**

By **Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona**

Directed by **Darryl V. Jones**

**April 2 - May 2, 2021 (Opens: April 8)**

Two prisoners on Robben Island, the South African prison where Nelson Mandela was held for 18 years, are rehearsing a political tragedy. In this apartheid-era drama written by preeminent South African playwright Athol Fugard along with co-writers John Kani and Winston Ntshona, these men are arrested for anti-apartheid activism. Their days are filled with menial and arduous tasks, and their evenings with preparing a cell-block performance of Sophocles' *Antigone*, a play that debates the virtues of civil disobedience, the morality of capital punishment, and the impact of state-sponsored violence. One man faces life imprisonment while the other learns he is up for early release. The bonds of their brotherhood are tested as they wrestle with the consequences of protest and recommit to the righteousness of their cause.

**"THERE IS NO THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE MORE ESSENTIAL."**

— *New York Times*

## **FATHER/DAUGHTER**

By **Kait Kerrigan** | **World Premiere**

Directed by **M. Graham Smith**

**May 7 - June 20, 2021 (Opens: May 13)**

**Harry's UpStage in Aurora's Dashow Wing**

In its world premiere, *Father/Daughter* by playwright Kait Kerrigan is a beautifully written contemporary romance. Two actors play both pairs of lovers in this structurally inventive play that asks how our relationships with our parents and children impact our romantic lives. In parallel stories told 23 years apart, Baldwin is Miranda's 30-year-old divorced father who is trying to forge a new relationship with a beguiling woman, and Miranda is Baldwin's 30-year-old daughter, who has found herself in her first serious relationship. What can we learn from the relationships we choose in order to repair the relationships we inherit? Kerrigan is an award winning playwright, librettist, and lyricist (*We Have to Hold Hands*, *Mad Ones*).

“KAIT KERRIGAN’S WRITING IS INSIGHTFUL, AUDACIOUS, AND LIABLE TO MAKE YOU EITHER LAUGH OR CRY WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT.”

— Josh Costello, Artistic Director

## **Edward Albee's THREE TALL WOMEN**

By **Edward Albee**

Directed by **Barbara Damashek**

**June 18 - July 18, 2021 (Opens: June 24)**

Winner of the 1994 Pulitzer Prize in Drama, *Edward Albee's Three Tall Women* is a scathing critique of Albee's upbringing, his mother, and the culture he was steeped in. Three women of different generations—a young lawyer, a ninety-two-year-old woman, and her middle-aged caretaker—convene in a beautifully appointed bedroom, where a long life is laid out for display. As the elderly woman cascades from regal and charming to vicious and wretched, she remembers her life: her husband and their cold, passionless marriage; her son and their estrangement. How did she become this? And who is she now? This masterpiece by Edward Albee (*A Delicate Balance*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*) takes us on a journey through the milestones and mysteries of growing up and growing old.

“BRILLIANT. EXTRAORDINARY. INGENIOUS. SUPERB...*THREE TALL WOMEN* IS ONE TOWERING MASTERPIECE...SO PERFECTLY CONCEIVED AND EXECUTED THAT IT

ENTHRALLS FOR EVERY SECOND IT'S ON STAGE AND INTRIGUES LONG BEYOND  
THE TIME WE SPEND IN THE THEATER.”

— *DC Metro Theatre Arts*

Full-season (6-play), 5-play, and 3-play subscriptions are currently available (\$111-\$396) and offer priority seating, easy exchanges, missed performance and guest discounts, and more. Single tickets (\$35-\$70) go on sale for subscribers July 21, and on sale August 4 to the general public.

Aurora subscribers save as much as **53%** off single ticket prices. Current full-time teachers receive 20% off subscription prices, and active and retired military personnel also receive 20% off subscription prices through Theatre Communications Group's Blue Star Theatres program. Patrons 35 and under are eligible for half-price subscriptions, and deeply discounted subscriptions are available for full-time college and high school students.

For subscriptions or single tickets, the public can call 510.843.4822 or visit [auroratheatre.org](http://auroratheatre.org).

### **CALENDAR EDITORS**

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**Harry's UpStage in Aurora's Dashow Wing**

**Edward Albee's THREE TALL WOMEN**

By **Edward Albee**

Directed by **Barbara Damashek**

**June 18 - July 18, 2021 (Opens: June 24)**

**SHOWS**

Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 p.m.; Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m.

Saturday at 2 p.m. & 8 p.m.

Sunday at 2 p.m.

**WHERE**

Aurora Theatre Company | 2081 Addison Street | Berkeley, CA

**TICKETS**

For single tickets (\$35-\$70) or subscriptions (\$111-\$396), the public can call **(510) 843-4822** or visit **[www.auroratheatre.org](http://www.auroratheatre.org)**.

**Subscriptions on sale March 24. Single tickets on sale for subscribers July 21, and on sale August 4 to the general public.**

**ABOUT AURORA THEATRE COMPANY**

Aurora Theatre Company is known for work that invigorates audiences and artists through a shared experience of professional, intimate theatre. Aurora challenges itself and the broader community to do better, think deeper, laugh louder and cast wider nets of empathy toward the world. Through its productions of both classic and new works, it supports the Bay Area community by hiring local artists and artisans. It has an operating budget of just over \$2 million.

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