

UNDERDOGS

STORIES OF UPSTARTS, OUTSIDERS, AND EMIGRÉS

2023 – 24 SEASON

OLNEY THEATRE CENTER



1 INK

AUGUST 30 – SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

Co-produced with and performed at
ROUND HOUSE THEATRE IN BETHESDA

by James Graham
directed by Jason Loewith

London, 1969. A brash young Australian named Rupert Murdoch approaches journalist Larry Lamb with a staggeringly ambitious proposition: to turn the struggling paper *The Sun* into the best-selling tabloid in the UK... within a year. An unexpected partnership is born as Lamb and Murdoch assemble a team of scrappy underdog journalists and begin to transform *The Sun* into a populist juggernaut. Once they discover the formula to success, the consequences are thrilling and terrifying. This “riveting” (*The Guardian*) Tony Award-winning Broadway and West End hit depicts the birth of our hyper-partisan news culture in a truth-is-stranger-than-fiction drama that will have you on the edge of your seat.

“Ink abounds in adrenaline.”

The New York Times

2 THE BROTHERS PARANORMAL

SEPTEMBER 27 – OCTOBER 29, 2023

MULITZ-GUELSKY THEATRE LAB

by Prince Gomolvilas
co-directed by Hallie Gordon & Aria Velz

Prepare to be thrilled, chilled, and moved! For Halloween, Olney Theatre is home to a modern horror story of family, migration, and the spirits that haunt us. It's 2007, and Thai-American brothers Max and Visarut haven't had a single case for their paranormal investigation business since they opened. Finally, their first customer arrives: Delia, a Black woman who thinks a Thai-speaking ghost is haunting her house for reasons unknown. Max is happy to sign her up for a deluxe investigation package, but when the brothers visit Delia and her husband Felix at home, strange things begin to happen.

**“Comedy, melancholy, suspense,
and several genuine scares.”**

The New Yorker

3 TBA MUSICAL

NOVEMBER 8 – DECEMBER 31, 2023

MAINSTAGE

We're legally prohibited from sharing the name of this Broadway classic until April. But by now, everyone knows that Olney Theatre's TRADITION of bringing great musicals TO LIFE over the holidays for all family members from every generation is the PERFECT MATCH. So get your tickets early because once we reveal the title, the seats will fill up in just a few SUNRISE and SUNSETS.

KEN LUDWIG'S

4 LEND ME A SOPRANO

FEBRUARY 7 – MARCH 10, 2024

MAINSTAGE

by Ken Ludwig
Directed by Eleanor Holdridge

Master of comedy and farce, Ken Ludwig, has adapted his Tony Award-winning Broadway hit *Lend Me A Tenor* for a new generation, with the genders swapped. The hilarious result is *Lend Me A Soprano*! It's 1934, and world-famous Italian soprano Elena Firenzi, the biggest star of her era, is in town for a one-night-only concert with the Cleveland Grand Opera Company. The gala performance is the apex of general manager Lucille Wylie's career, and she's given her assistant Jo one job—keep Elena away from men and booze until curtain. But when events spiral out of Jo's control, she's got one chance to set everything right.

“A dizzying amount of fun.”

The Houston Chronicle

EAST COAST PREMIERE

5 AVAAZ

MARCH 6 – APRIL 7, 2024

MULITZ-GUELSKY THEATRE LAB

written and performed by Michael Shayan
directed by Moritz von Stuelpnagel

Welcome to Roya's house, where she's laid out a spread especially for you to celebrate Nowruz, the Iranian New Year. She's got a chicken in the oven, but the true feast is the story of her life: beginning in Iran as part of that country's small but ancient Jewish community, her flight from Tehran after the revolution, and her struggle to survive as an immigrant and single mother in Los Angeles. As a Jew in Iran and an Iranian in America, Roya relates her story with a heavy dose of humor, an essential survival tactic for outsiders. Most significantly, Roya is portrayed by her adult son and the author of *Avaaz*, Michael Shayan, in a solo performance that combines masterful storytelling with a loving tribute.

6 ISLANDER:
A NEW MUSICAL

APRIL 11 – 28, 2024
MAINSTAGE

Conceived and Directed by Amy Draper
Book by Stewart Melton
Music and Lyrics by Finn Anderson

Winner of Best New Musical at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, *Islander* tells a modern myth featuring two actors who use live mixing and looping technology to create a sonic landscape as dramatic as the Scottish Highlands. Eilidh is the only child on Kinnan Island, where most of the dwindling population has moved to the “Big Land.” The government has proposed to resettle the rest, and the town must vote soon on whether or not to accept the offer. But the day after a baby whale beaches itself, Eilidh discovers a red-haired girl named Arran along the shore, who seems straight out of Scottish folklore. *Islander* takes audiences on a magical journey to transcend loss, recover hope, and find community.

“the loops and harmonies ...
for *Islander: A New Musical*
are astonishing.”

The Guardian

WORLD PREMIERE MUSICAL
7 LONG WAY DOWN

MAY 22 – JUNE 23, 2024
MULITZ-GUDELSKY THEATRE LAB

by Dahlak Brathwaite and Khiyon Hursey
Adapted from the bestselling novel by Jason Reynolds
Directed by Ken-Matt Martin

Growing up, Will’s big brother taught him three iron-clad rules of how to behave when gun violence claims someone close: Don’t cry. Don’t snitch. Get revenge. So when his brother is himself gunned down, Will is determined to follow the code. He gets in the elevator on the top floor of his apartment building, armed and ready to hit the streets in search of vengeance. What happens on the way down is an emotional hip-hop journey through a history of loss focused on the challenge of changing the future. This new musical, based on the Newberry Medal Honor-winning Young Adult novel by DMV native Jason Reynolds, is a powerful story that will go to the Apollo Theatre in Harlem after its limited Olney Theatre engagement.

“Though its narrative is contained
to just an elevator ride, *Long
Way Down* carries the emotional
weight of an epic saga.”

Time Magazine

8 BEAUTIFUL
The Carole King Musical

JULY 3 – AUGUST 25, 2024
MAINSTAGE

Book by Douglas McGrath
Words and Music by
Gerry Goffin & Carole King, Barry Mann & Cynthia Weil
Directed by Amy Anders Corcoran

Before Carole King became the legendary singer-songwriter who helped define an era, she was a 16-year-old Brooklyn kid named Carole Klein trying to sell her songs to the big hitmakers in Times Square. When she meets a fellow Queens College student named Barry Goffin, she gains the perfect lyricist for her music—and the love of her life. Soon Carole and Barry are churning out hits like “Take Good Care of My Baby,” “Up On A Roof,” and “Will You (Still) Love Me Tomorrow,” for acts like the Shirelles and The Drifters. But success in the music biz doesn’t necessarily bring happiness, and as Barry spirals out of control, Carole will need to find the strength to take back control of her life and career.

“A jukebox musical with a soul.”

The Los Angeles Times

SPECIAL
ADD-ON

9 A CHRISTMAS CAROL
A Ghost Story of Christmas

NOVEMBER 24 – DECEMBER 31, 2023
MULTIZ-GUDELSKY THEATRE LAB

Adapted and Performed by Paul Morella

It wouldn’t be Christmas without Paul Morella’s stunning solo rendition of Charles Dickens’s classic tale that represents everything great about the holiday. This is *A Christmas Carol* in its purest form, with 99% of the text drawn directly from the original novella. Even more impressive, Morella’s theatrical portrayal of over 50 characters honors how Dickens himself would tour the world reciting the story. Now in its fourteenth holiday season, the show is a family tradition throughout the region and a gem constantly being discovered by new audiences.

PLUS

Olney Outdoors on the Root Stage at Omi’s Pavilion
Behind the Scenes and Beyond the Stage events
Staging the Future Campus Renovations

