Jeeves & Wooster in
PERFECT NONSENSE

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Five years ago, Elizabeth Williamson, our Associate Artistic Director, saw Sean Foley’s Olivier Award-winning production of *Jeeves and Wooster in “Perfect Nonsense”* in London. She fell in love with the production and was determined to bring it to Hartford Stage. It is thrilling to present the American premiere. Thank you, Elizabeth. And thank you, Sean.

It’s also a pleasure to welcome this terrific cast of old friends to Hartford. I directed Chandler Williams eighteen years ago in *The Winter’s Tale* at Williamstown Theatre Festival; Arnie Burton eleven years ago in *The Merchant of Venice* at Theatre for a New Audience; and Eddie Korbich five years ago in *A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder* on Broadway (I have been joking that I’m old enough to have directed everyone in American theatre—but I’m starting to fear that it may actually be true).

We would like to thank David and Janice Klein and The Saunders Foundation for sponsoring this production.

Have a perfectly delightful time! And join us next month for the last production of our 2018/19 season: the world premiere musical, *The Flamingo Kid*.

—

Darko Tresnjak
Artistic Director

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DARKO TRESNJAK
Artistic Director

PRESENTS

Jeeves & Wooster in
Perfect Nonsense

A New Play from the Works of P.G. WODEHOUSE

By THE GOODALE BROTHERS

Scenic Design
ALICE POWER

Costume Design
ALICE POWER

Lighting Design
PHILIP ROSENBERG

Sound Design & Original Music
JOHN GROMADA

Choreographer
ADAM CATES

Dialect Coach
BEN FUREY

Casting by
TELSEY + COMPANY
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Associate Artistic Director
ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON

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David & Janice Klein

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The Saunders Foundation

Jeeves & Wooster in “Perfect Nonsense” is supported by the Hartford Stage Master Artist Fund.
WELCOME & ENJOY THE SHOW!

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Accessible seating for patrons with mobility requirements available in the front row of sections B & F.

For your eating and drinking pleasure, snacks, soda, wine, beer, and mixed drinks are available at our concessions bar on both levels.

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If you are using a Hartford Stage Listening Device, please remove your own personal hearing aid or make sure you turn it off if you leave it in your ear. When you remove the Hartford Stage device from your head, please make sure the volume is turned off on the device. Taking these steps will reduce the amount of static feedback from the listening system.

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There is a new automated parking system for the MAT Garage, which is adjacent to Hartford Stage. Please note the new procedure below and see the Box Office with any questions.

1. Retain the Parking Ticket you receive as you enter the MAT Garage adjacent to Hartford Stage.
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OPEN CAPTIONED PERFORMANCES
For patrons who are deaf or have hearing loss. FREE with admission.

Jeeves & Wooster  Apr. 7, 2:00 & 7:30 pm
The Flamingo Kid  May 26, 2:00 & 7:30 pm

AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES
For patrons who are blind or have low vision. FREE with admission.

Jeeves & Wooster  Apr. 13, 2:00 pm
The Flamingo Kid  Jun. 1, 2:00 pm
The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Sound Designers in LORT theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.

The Director and Choreographer are members of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

Artists subject to change.

The CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Bertie Wooster ................................................................. Chandler Williams
Jeeves ................................................................................. Arnie Burton
Seppings ............................................................................... Eddie Korbich

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERMISSION.

Assistant Director ............................................................ Alexander Coddington
Assistant Lighting Designer ................................................ Matt Kresch
Assistant Sound Designer .................................................... Joel Abbott
Production Assistant ............................................................ Rachel Canowitz
Supporting Production Assistant ......................................... Nicki Berger

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Trattoria
My first taste of P.G. Wodehouse came in my early twenties when my twin brother and a mutual friend of ours used to quote PGW phrases, sentences and extracts back and forth at each other during late-night drinking sessions. I was never sure whether it was the whisky, the Wodehouse or a combination of the two that was making me laugh hysterically, but for years my experience of the great man was confined to the blurry hours of the night.

It was only when looking for material for a one-man show that I picked up a Jeeves and Wooster book in the cold light of day and realised what a comic genius Wodehouse really was. I also discovered that some of his best material was being filtered through the mouthpiece of Bertie Wooster. Here was a storyteller, raconteur and vaudevillian performer who was capable of charming any group of people into submission. Not only was he a perfect frontman, but the characters who peopled his world were gloriously eccentric, mad and passionate, all with their bizarre and peculiar obsessions. Twenty pages into Stiff Upper Lip, Jeeves and I knew that I had my one-man show.

The idea of indulging in a world where the loss of an objet d’art from your silver collection was perceived as being a matter of life and death could not have been more appealing. So I went ahead and performed a couple of one-man shows based on this material at the Edinburgh Festival and roped in my brother David to direct The Code of the Woosters.

Twenty years later, the two of us were approached by Mark Goucher to create another Wodehouse show, but on a larger scale. It dawned on us that if we wanted to keep Bertie as the raconteur we should write a play in which, encouraged by his drinking pals, he would take over a West End theatre and attempt to tell one of his stories in the form of a one-man show. As his loyal valet, Jeeves would naturally accompany Bertie...
to the theatre and, in the certain knowledge that the show was destined to go horribly wrong, he would have made certain contingency plans. The script almost wrote itself, and we revelled in the idea that the inscrutable and dignified Jeeves might draw on some hidden talents to play a number of the other characters.

We passed Perfect Nonsense on to Mark Goucher, did a reading of it for him and in turn the Wodehouse Estate, who gave it their blessing. The wonderfully inventive comedy director Sean Foley was then brought on board and his inspired suggestions, combined with Alice Power’s brilliant ideas for the set design, helped raise the script to another level—including the concept of the ever ingenious Jeeves being a sort of onstage designer and director of proceedings. Truly, an “eminence grise.”

What was most gratifying about the whole process was that everyone was completely in tune with the conceit of the show and a lot of what was discovered in the rehearsal room found its way into the script. A true process of evolution, we like to think... And, if added to that extra “nonsense” that came from preparing and rehearsing the play, you can count on three expert comic performances, then you will stand a good chance of making all that nonsense “perfect.”

This piece was adapted from the introduction to Jeeves and Wooster in “Perfect Nonsense,” published in Great Britain in 2014 by Nick Hern Books, and has been reprinted with permission.
Learn more about Wodehouse’s work in musical theatre upstairs in The John and Kelly Hartman Foundation Lobby.
P.G. Wodehouse is widely considered, as Sebastian Faulks put it, “the best English comic novelist of the century.” He began publishing at the turn of the twentieth century, writing short stories and novels about life at boys’ schools, and the occasional song for the musical theatre stage. But it was in the 1910s that he first came to prominence, as he began to introduce his great comic characters: Jeeves and Bertie Wooster, Psmith (“the p is silent, as in phthisis, psychic, and ptarmigan”), and the voluble Mr. Mulliner.

Jeeves and Wooster made their first entrance in the short story “Extricating Young Gussie” in 1915. Over the next 60 years, Wodehouse would write 35 short stories and 10 novels featuring the bumbling, hapless young socialite Bertie Wooster, and his omniscient and imperturbable valet Jeeves. Long before the last of these (Aunts Aren’t Gentlemen in 1974) saw the light of day, Jeeves and Wooster had entered the collective imagination. Like Holmes and Watson, or Miss Marple, or Peter Pan, they struck a chord with readers on both sides of the Atlantic. Everyone wanted a Jeeves to advise and minister to them; with the arrival of the internet, Jeeves even had a brief second life as a rival to Google with the search engine “Ask Jeeves.”

Wodehouse’s work is also remarkable for its intricate and masterful plotting, which may be due in part to his experience writing for the theatre; he was one of the most popular lyricists and book writers on Broadway in the 1910s and 20s. Looking back at his work in a Paris Review interview in 1975, he said:

“I think the success of every novel—if it’s a novel of action—depends on the high spots. The thing to do is to say to yourself, ‘Which are my big scenes?’ and then get every drop of juice out of them. The principle I always go on in writing a novel is to think of the characters in terms of actors in a play. I say to myself, if a big name were playing this part, and if he found that after a strong first act he had practically nothing to do in the second act, he would walk out. Now, then, can I twist the story so as to give him plenty to do all the way through?”

Wodehouse is also renowned for his comic turn of phrase, for which Christopher Hitchens dubbed him “the gold standard of English wit.” Shakespeare was his favorite author (his grandson told the Times he reread the Complete Works every five years) and as Max Davidson wrote, “Like Shakespeare, Wodehouse has furnished his admirers with quotes for every occasion, little gems of wit and observation which have lost none of their sparkle.”

Although the Edwardian world inhabited by Jeeves and Wooster is now a century in the past, Wodehouse’s work continues to appeal to readers and audiences around the world. He has been constantly read, adapted, and enjoyed on the page, stage, and screen over the last century, and a spate of new editions of the novels suggests his popularity is in no danger of waning. As Evelyn Waugh said in 1961, “Mr. Wodehouse’s world can never stale. He will continue to release future generations from captivity that may be more irksome than our own.”

—Elizabeth Williamson
ARNIE BURTON

JEEVES


EDDIE KORBICH

SEPPINGS


CHANDLER WILLIAMS

BERTIE WOOSTER

Hartford Stage Cloud 9. Broadway The Winslow Boy (Roundabout), In the Next Room, or the vibrator play (Lincoln Center Theatre), Mary Stuart (Mortimer, Donmar Warehouse), Translations (Lieutenant Yolland, Manhattan Theater Club). Off-Broadway King Lear (Edmund, TFANA), Richard III (Clarence, Old Vic/World Tour/BAM), Crimes of the Heart (Roundabout), Rope (Drama Dept.), The Mysteries (Classic Stage Company). Regional Credits include Richard II (title role, Playmaker’s Rep), McCarter Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage. Several seasons at Williamstown Theatre Festival. Film & Television Credits include Public Enemies, The Blacklist, The Knick, Elementary, Person of Interest, Law & Order: SVU, The Good Wife.

P.G. WODEHOUSE

AUTHOR

Pelham (“Plum”) Grenville Wodehouse was born in Guildford in 1881. After leaving school he spent two years as a banker, before switching careers to sports reporter and columnist at the Globe newspaper. Around this time he started writing short stories, mainly for boys’ magazine The Captain, before discovering his talent for comic dialogue. By 1910 he was reaching millions of readers all over the world, and dividing his time between his homes in the
US, France and Britain. In his ninety-six years he wrote almost two hundred short stories, plays, articles, song lyrics—including working with Cole Porter on the musical *Anything Goes*—and novels. He began writing the *Jeeves and Wooster* novels, for which he is best known, with *The Man with Two Left Feet* in 1917, followed by others such as *Right Ho, Jeeves* (1934), *The Code of the Woosters* (1938) and *Stiff Upper Lip, Jeeves* (1963), and finally *Aunts Aren’t Gentlemen* in 1974. His final years saw him constantly in and out of hospitals with a series of illnesses. He continued writing throughout, leaving his final work, *Sunset at Blandings*, unfinished. He died of a heart attack in a hospital in Southampton, Long Island, on Valentine’s Day 1975.

**THE GOODALE BROTHERS PLAYWRIGHTS**

Like many siblings growing up together, writers Robert and David Goodale enjoyed their own, very particular brand of humour. As children they created a range of ridiculous characters that seamlessly evolved into members of their extended family. It was only later that they discovered that P.G. Wodehouse had beaten them to it, in creating an entirely credible world full of even more deliciously bonkers characters. As adults entering the real world, Robert became an actor, while David pursued a career as a documentary filmmaker, but both remained committed to making people laugh. In 2010 they were encouraged to combine their comic talents to adapt P.G. Wodehouse’s *The Code of the Woosters* for the stage. They finally put pen to paper, and several drafts later, with the blessing of the Wodehouse Estate, *Perfect Nonsense* was born.

**SEAN FOLEY DIRECTOR**

*Hartford Stage* Debut. Broadway/West End As Director: *The Miser* (also co-adapted), Olivier Award nomination, Best New Comedy; *The Painkiller* (also adapted); *The Dresser; Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense*, Olivier Award, Best New Comedy; *I Can’t Sing; What The Butler Saw; Arturo Brachetti: Change* (also co-wrote), Olivier Award nomination, Best Entertainment; *The Ladykillers*, 5 Olivier Award nominations including Best New Play and Best Director. As Actor: *Do You Come Here Often?* (also co-wrote), Olivier Award, Best Entertainment; *The Play What I Wrote* (also co-wrote), Olivier Award, Best New Comedy (also Tony nomination); *Ducktastic* (also co-wrote), Olivier Award nomination, Best New Comedy. UK/International Co-Artistic Director of the right size theatre company, 1989-2003; created, co-wrote and performed in 10 original comedies; toured nationally and internationally throughout Europe, South America, the Middle East, West Africa, Singapore, Malaysia, and India. As Director: *A Mad World My Masters* (RSC/Barbican); *Ben Hur; Present Laughter; The Walworth Farce* (Olympia, Dublin); *The Critic; The Real Inspector Hound; Joan Rivers: A Work In Progress; Catherine Tate Live; Armstrong and Miller Live*. As Actor: *Hysteria; I Am Shakespeare; Mr Puntila and His Man Matti; Hamlet. Film* As Director: *Mindhorn. As Actor: All Is True; Mindhorn: The Harry Hill Movie; Gabriel and Me; Act Without Words 1. Television* As Director: *Marilyn Monroe and Billy Wilder: Urban Myth; Diana, Freddie and Kenny: Urban Myth*. As Actor: *Foley and McColl: This Way Up; Wild West; Brass Eye; Twisted Tales; Happiness. Education/Training* Oxford University, First Class Degree, Modern History; Ecole Philippe Gaulier et Monika Pagneaux, Paris.

**ALICE POWER SCENIC DESIGN | COSTUME DESIGN**

*Hartford Stage* Debut. Recent Work Includes *A Christmas Carol* for Liverpool Playhouse; Noel Coward’s *Present Laughter* for Chichester Festival Theatre; Moliere’s *The Miser* at The Garrick Theatre; *The Painkiller*, adapted and directed by Sean Foley for The Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company season at The Garrick; *The Walworth Farce* by Enda Walsh at the Olympia Theatre Dublin starring Brendan, Domhnall and Brian Gleeson; Olivier Award-winning *Jeeves and Wooster in Perfect Nonsense* at the Duke of Yorks and UK tour; *A Mad World My Masters* by Thomas Middleton at the RSC’s Swan Theatre, Barbican and UK tour; Joe Orton’s farce *What the Butler Saw* at The Vaudeville Theatre; the live show for BBC1’s BAFTA-winning double act Armstrong
and Miller; and Joan Rivers: A Work in Progress at the Edinburgh Festival and Leicester Square Theatre. Alice designed and invented visual comedy for The Right Size between 1991 and 2006. She designed their Olivier Award-winning and Tony-nominated productions of The Play What I Wrote and Ducktastic!, directed by Kenneth Branagh. Other The Right Size shows include Moose, Hold Me Down, Penny Dreadful, Baldy Hopkins and Bewilderness. Other designs for the West End include Kathy Burke’s production of Betty and Do You Come Here Often? by The Right Size, which won the Olivier Award for Best Entertainment in 1999.

PHILIP ROSENBERG
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JOHN GROMADA
SOUND DESIGN & ORIGINAL MUSIC

ADAM CATES
CHOREOGRAPHER
Hartford Stage As Associate Choreographer: Anastasia; Kiss Me, Kate. Regional The World According to Snoopy (also co-book writer; Theatre Under the Stars & Theatre Aspen), A Funny Thing...Forum, My Fair Lady (Gulfshore Playhouse), The Little Mermaid (Arkansas Rep), Beauty & the Beast (Music Theatre Wichita), Halka (Bard Music Festival), The Magic Flute, Eugene Onegin (Juilliard Opera), Maria de Buenos Aires (Anchorage Opera), Gypsy (New London Barn Playhouse). Broadway/National Tour As Associate Choreographer: A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder, Anastasia, Anything Goes with Sutton Foster/Joel Grey, Doctor Dolittle with Tommy Tune, The Wizard of Oz. Upcoming La Boheme (Santa Fe Opera; Choreographer and Associate Director). Thank you to Sean, Darko, and Elizabeth. www.adamcates.com

BEN FUREY
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The Explorers Club (Manhattan Theatre Club); Animal, Cloud 9, Harper Regan (Atlantic Theatre); Apologia, The Last Match, The Language Archive, If There Is I Haven’t Found It Yet (Roundabout); Sweeney Todd (Barrow St); Appropriate (Signature Theatre); Fairview (Soho Rep). National Tours Credits include A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder, Curious Incident... Mamma Mia!, Billy Elliot, Phantom of the Opera, Spamalot. Regional/International Williamstown Theatre Festival, Goodspeed Opera, Papermill, Guthrie, Two River, Canon (Toronto), Palm Beach DramaWorks, Gate (Dublin), Colorado and NC Shakespeare Festivals. Film & Television Credits include Elementary, Blindspot, Tales of the City, Lost City of Z, Vine Talk. Teaching UNC School of the Arts, Juilliard.

TELSEY + COMPANY
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LORI LUNDQUIST
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

Hartford Stage The Age of Innocence, Ether Dome, Somewhere, To Kill a Mockingbird. Recent The Age of Innocence, The Niceties (McCarter Theatre) Describe The Night (Alley Theater and in NYC at The Atlantic). Broadway Fosse, The Best Man, Holiday, and London Assurance, Misalliance, The Deep Blue Sea (Roundabout Theatre Company). National Tours Fosse, Spelling Bee, Will Roger’s Follies. New York Head of Passes with Phylicia Rashad (The Public); Julie Taymor’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream (TFANA); The Legend of Georgia McBride (MCC); Gloria (Vineyard); Incident at Vichy, Big Love (Signature); Into The Woods and the musical version of Two Gentlemen of Verona (NYSF at the Delacorte in Central Park); Civil War Christmas (NYTW and Long Wharf); The Shaggs, The Burnt Part Boys (Playwrights Horizons). Regional Credits include the world premiere of Sousatzka The Musical in Toronto, Maltz-Jupiter Theatre, The Alley Theater, LaJolla Playhouse, The Huntington, The Ordway, Trinity Rep, Long Wharf, Kansas City Rep. Ms. Lundquist is proud to be a member of AEA.

HOPE ROSE KELLY
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Hartford Stage The Engagement Party. Regional Shakespeare & Company, Montana Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Public Theatre in Maine, Stonington Opera House, McCarter Theatre, Wilma Theatre, WAM Theatre, George Street Playhouse, Hangar Theatre, CLOC. Education Ithaca College and University of Toronto Professional Positions Actors’ Equity Association, Second Vice Chair on the Board of the Stage Managers’ Association, SMMP Mentor for USITT, Associate Artist at WAM Theatre.

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DARKO TRESNJAK
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Darker Tresnjak is the fifth Artistic Director of the 55-year-old Hartford Stage. He received the 2014 Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards for his direction of A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder, starring Jefferson Mays. He received an Obie Award in 2015 for his direction of The Killer at TFANA, starring Michael Shannon. His production of Anastasia, which premiered at Hartford Stage in 2016, opened on Broadway at the Broadhurst Theatre in 2017. A national tour subsequently followed in the fall of 2018, as well as international productions in Spain and Germany. In 2019 the production will open in Mexico and the Netherlands. He made his Metropolitan Opera debut with a production of Samson et Dalila, starring Elīna Garanča and Roberto Alagna, which opened their 2018-2019 season. He has received four Connecticut Critics Circle Awards for his Hartford Stage productions of A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder, Hamlet, Anastasia and The Comedy of Errors (set design). Other productions at Hartford Stage include the upcoming production of The Flamingo Kid; The Engagement Party; A Lesson from Aloes; A Midsummer Night’s Dream; Heartbreak House; Rear Window, starring Kevin Bacon; Hamlet; Private Lives; Kiss Me, Kate; Macbeth; La Dispute; Twelfth Night; The Tempest; and Bell, Book & Candle. From 2004 to 2009, he was the Artistic Director of The Old Globe Shakespeare Festival, where he received five San Diego Critics Circle Awards, four for his direction of Pericles, The Winter’s Tale, A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder and Cyrano de Bergerac, starring Patrick Page, and one for Excellence in Artistic Direction. Favorite productions include The Ghosts of Versailles with Patti LuPone and Patricia Racette, Macbeth with Plácido Domingo at LA Opera and The Merchant of Venice with F. Murray Abraham at Theatre for a New Audience and the Royal Shakespeare Company Complete Works Festival. He has also directed productions at Williamstown Theatre Festival, Huntington Theatre Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Goodspeed Musicals, Westport Country Playhouse, Vineyard Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Stratford Shakespeare Festival and The Public Theater.

ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Elizabeth Williamson is in her seventh season at Hartford Stage. In addition to serving as Associate Artistic Director, she also leads new play development for the company. Prior to joining Hartford Stage, she spent four seasons as Associate Artistic Director and Literary Manager for Pioneer Theatre Company. Dramaturgy Hartford Stage: The Engagement Party, Make Believe, Romeo and Juliet, The Body of an American, An Opening in Time, Hamlet, Reverberation, Macbeth, Man in a Case, Somewhere, A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder and others; London’s West End: The Inheritance; Broadway: A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder (Tony Award for Best Musical), Anastasia; Off-Broadway/Regional: The Body of an American (Primary Stages); Touch(ed), In, Find and Sign and others (Pioneer Theatre Company); M. Proust (Steppenwolf); Mefistofele (Theatre de la Jeune Lune). Directing Cloud 9, Seder, Henry V (Hartford Stage); The Life and Death of Pier Paolo Pasolini (Act French Festival, Abingdon); The Floating World (HERE); Rare Bird (Babcock Theatre); Owners (Alter); The Second Amendment Club (AMS); The Maids (FringeNYC). Translation La Dispute (Hartford Stage); The Life and Death of Pier Paolo Pasolini (Act French Festival, Abingdon). Education Bachelor’s in Theatre and Comparative Literature, Bennington College; Master’s in European Literature, Oxford University; trained at the École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq. Awards NEA Fellowship in Literary Translation.
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Wardrobe Supervisor

Jodi Stone
Wig Supervisor

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Props Manager
Sara Morand
Assistant Props Manager

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Aaron Hochheiser
Master Electrician

Jackie Hecker
Assistant Master Electrician

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Lucas Clapton
Audio/Video Supervisor
Darren Alley
Assistant Audio/Video Supervisor

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Deck Crew
Sarah Kozma
Deck Crew

Gino Costabile
Prop Artisan
Barry Sellers
First Hand

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Christina Beam
Stitcher

Megan O’Connell
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AETNA NEW VOICES FELLOW 2018: MFONISO UDOFIA

The Aetna New Voices Fellowship provides an opportunity for innovative playwrights of diversity and color to develop new work and become engaged in the Greater Hartford community. The program includes the commissioning of a new play, along with developmental readings and workshops, and working with Hartford Stage’s Education department to mentor teen artists. The 2018 Fellow is Mfoniso Udofia.

Mfoniso, a first-generation Nigerian-American storyteller and educator, attended Wellesley College and obtained her MFA in Acting from the American Conservatory Theater. During her stay in the Bay, she co-pioneered a youth initiative, The Nia Project, providing artistic outlets for youth residing in Bayview Huntspoint. She is the recipient of the 2017 Helen Merrill Playwright Award and the 2017-2018 McKnight National Residency and Commission at The Playwrights’ Center in Minneapolis. Mfoniso’s plays have been developed at and/or presented/produced by The New York Theatre Workshop, The Playwrights Realm, The Magic Theatre, Dr. Barbara Ann Teer’s National Black Theatre, Hedgebrook, Sundance Theatre Lab, NNPN, Space on Ryder Farm, NNPN New Play Showcase, Makehouse, Soul Productions, terraNOVA, 173, The New Black Fest, Rising Circle’s INKTank, At Hand Theatre Company, The Standard Collective, American Slavery Project, Liberation Theatre Company, and more. For the last several years, she has been crafting the Ufot Cycle, a planned series of nine plays looking at the history of Nigerian immigration in America through the eyes of one family. These interrelated plays include Sojourners, runboyrun, and Her Portmanteau, which was developed in 2015 at the National Black Theatre. Her commission for Hartford Stage will be part of this cycle.

PAST AETNA NEW VOICES FELLOWS

Past fellows include Matthew Lopez, whose two-part play The Inheritance was recently nominated for 8 Olivier Awards; Kaneza Schaal, whose Jack & just completed a national tour, and Quiara Alegría Hudes, who won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Water by the Spoonful.

Aetna has been the sole funder of this remarkable program since 2004. Aetna’s mission is to build a healthier world—one person, one community at a time. Their team of nearly 50,000 employees is committed to providing access to affordable, high-quality health care, and making the health care experience simpler and more responsive.
SHORT TAKES: NEWS FROM HARTFORD STAGE

A LOOK AT OUR LOBBY
Beloved British writer P.G. Wodehouse’s prodigious output in prose was matched by his contributions to the stage as lyricist, book writer, and playwright. This exhibit covers the major aspects of his theatre career, including his pioneering work in American musical comedy and more.

INCOMING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MELIA BENSUSSEN DIRECTING YERMA AT BOSTON’S HUNTINGTON THEATRE COMPANY
Prior to assuming her role as Artistic Director at Hartford Stage in June, Melia Bensussen will be directing Spanish playwright and poet Federico Garcia Lorca’s Yerma at the Huntington Theatre Company in Boston, in a translation and adaptation by Huntington Playwright-in-Residence Melinda Lopez. Yerma will run May 31–June 30, 2019. For more information, see www.huntingtontheatre.org/season/2018-2019/yerma.

A LOOK AHEAD TO NEXT SEASON
Subscriptions for the six-play mainstage season are now on sale. Three plays for the 2019/20 season have been announced, including Quixote Nuevo by Octavio Solis, Cry it Out by Molly Smith Metzler and Jane Eyre, adapted and directed by Hartford Stage Associate Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson. The upcoming season is the first to be helmed by incoming Artistic Director Melia Bensussen, who co-planned the season with outgoing Artistic Director Darko Tresnjak. Visit www.hartfordstage.org/subscribe or call the Hartford Stage Box Office at 860-527-5151. Please note that titles and artists are subject to change.

JAMES LECESNE HOSTS FUTURE PERFECT PROJECT WORKSHOP
James Lecesne (The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelekey) returned to Hartford Stage on Saturday, March 9, to host a daylong workshop for The Future Perfect Project. The Future Perfect Project was co-created by James Lecesne and Ryan Amador to empower LGBTQ high school students and student allies at Gay/Straight alliances, performing arts high schools, and youth centers across the country through songwriting and storytelling workshops. The goal of the workshops is to create safe spaces for LGBT and Questioning youth to express themselves and be seen and celebrated. Learn more about The Future Perfect Project at www.thefutureperfectproject.com.

Now in our 55th season, Hartford Stage is currently under the leadership of Artistic Director Darko Tresnjak. In January 2019, Melia Bensussen was named the sixth Artistic Director of Hartford Stage, and will assume the role in June. One of the nation’s leading resident theatres, Hartford Stage is known for producing innovative revivals of classics and provocative new plays and musicals, including 73 world and American premieres, as well as offering a distinguished education program, which reaches close to 21,000 students annually.

Since Tresnjak’s appointment in 2011, the theatre has presented the world premieres of the new musical *Anastasia* by Terrence McNally, Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens—currently on Broadway; *A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder* on Broadway, winner of four 2014 Tony Awards, including Best Musical and Best Direction of a Musical by Tresnjak; *Rear Window* with Kevin Bacon; Quiara Alegría Hudes’ *Water by the Spoonful*, winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama; *Breath & Imagination* by Daniel Beaty; Big Dance Theatre’s *Man in a Case* with Mikhail Baryshnikov; *Reverberation* by Matthew Lopez; *Seder* by Sarah Gancher; Agatha Christie’s *Murder on the Orient Express*, adapted for the stage by Ken Ludwig; *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton, adapted for the stage by Douglas McGrath; *Make Believe* by Bess Wohl; and *The Engagement Party* by Samuel Baum.

Hartford Stage has earned many of the nation’s most prestigious awards, including the 1989 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Other national honors include Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk, OBIE, and New York Critics Circle awards. Hartford Stage has produced nationally renowned titles, including the New York transfers of *Enchanted April*; *The Orphans’ Home Cycle*; *Resurrection* (later retitled *Through the Night*); *The Carpetbagger’s Children*; and *Tea at Five*.

The leading provider of theatre education programs in Connecticut, Hartford Stage’s offerings include student matinees, in-school theatre residencies, teen performance opportunities, theatre classes for students (ages 3-18) and adults, after school programs and professional development courses.
The Hartt School/Hartford Stage Partnership in Training

Now in its fifteenth year, The Hartt School/Hartford Stage Partnership in Training offers a unique alliance of an undergraduate acting conservatory program and a respected professional theatre—one of only two such collaborations in the country. This partnership helps ensure that acting students at the Hartt School receive rigorous training and bring their skills, imagination and intellect to the demands of a professional theatre setting. Hartford Stage staff and guest artists lead classes and workshops and faculty and students appear in Hartford Stage productions. Hartt students have been seen in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, A Christmas Carol, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Noises Off!, To Kill a Mockingbird, the Brand-NEW Festival of New Work, Antony & Cleopatra, Snow Falling on Cedars, The Crucible, The Tempest, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, Anastasia, The Comedy of Errors, The Age of Innocence and Henry V.

The University of Massachusetts Graduate Internships at Hartford Stage

Linking one of the most respected graduate programs in theatre with the Tony Award winning Hartford Stage, the University of Massachusetts Graduate Internships give Master of Fine Arts students in design, directing and dramaturgy the opportunity to work alongside the country’s most exciting artists. The Graduate Internships provide a valuable professional testing ground for students and are a natural complement to the practical, hands-on approach of UMass’ graduate program. In turn, Hartford Stage is enriched by the participation of the next generation of theatre artists. UMass students have worked on Boeing-Boeing, Zerline’s Tale, Gee’s Bend, Motherhood Out Loud, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Snow Falling on Cedars, The 39 Steps, Macbeth, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, and Hedda Gabler.

Capital Community College

This season will mark the eighth season of the One Play Program—a partnership between Hartford Stage and Capital Community College, designed to give the entire college community the opportunity to come together around one play each semester. In addition to offering discounted tickets for students and faculty, the program also brings members of each production’s creative team to the College to interact with students. Last season, 625 Capital students saw a performance at Hartford Stage, many reporting it was their first time at the theatre. This season’s One Play productions are Henry V and Detroit ’67. During the 2017-2018 academic year, in partnership with Hartford Stage and other Hartford theatre companies, Capital began to offer a new associate’s degree in theatre.
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