

2019-20

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ARTISTIC
EXCELLENCE
SOCIETY

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CLOCKWISE: TOP: Cast of *The Music Man*. Photo by Cliff Roles. (L to R) David Peterson; Marc Koeck and Jenna Burns, Tony and Maria from *West Side Story*; Lee Peterson. Photo by Angel Hissom. CENTER: The cast of *Show Boat* and Producing Artistic Director, Michael Donald Edwards. Photo by Cliff Roles. BOTTOM: (L to R) Lynn Nottage, playwright of *Las Meninas* and *Sweat*; Bob Bartner; and Yara Shoemaker. Photo by Tricia Mire. Cast of *Shakespeare in Love*. Photo by Cliff Roles.

2019-20 OVERVIEW

Asolo Rep's Artistic Excellence Society is an intimate group of donors whose gifts ensure Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards can make bold choices in selecting works that embody a spirit of risk-taking, collaboration, and innovation.

Each year, Michael identifies three or four productions that will benefit from the support of the Artistic Excellence Society. These gifts can enhance a show's production values to take the work from excellent to extraordinary—or—give confidence to take risks on works that are important to undertake artistically, that may challenge our audiences in new ways.

Artistic Excellence Society members will receive full scripts* and production histories for each of these shows. We hope that you will enjoy reading these materials as you look ahead to the next season!

**Please note that scripts are for your review only and cannot be distributed to the general public.*

2019-20 productions that will benefit from your support are:

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

Josh Rhodes, who helmed *Evita* in 2017, has become known at Asolo Rep for infusing classic musicals with fresh, innovative staging, making audiences feel like they are seeing these shows for the very first time. Josh returns to take on *The Sound of Music*. The Artistic Excellence Society support will allow Asolo Rep to create a high caliber production with a large cast and spectacular technical achievements.

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S

MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

The Orient Express will come to life in the Mertz Theatre. The most challenging aspect of this production will be creating the physical train, which acts as a central character in the play. With support from the Artistic Excellence Society, our creative team will be able to design a superb set and take audiences on a thrilling theatrical journey.

THE GREAT LEAP

IN THE COOK THEATRE

The Cook Theatre transforms into a full-fledged basketball court for this smart, intimate play that tells a compelling story of history, family and basketball. With support from the Artistic Excellence Society, *The Great Leap* continues Asolo Rep's tradition of producing cutting edge theatre and showcasing rising American playwrights.

HOOD:

A NEW ROBIN HOOD MUSICAL ADVENTURE

Asolo Rep is thrilled to partner with Broadway producer Tom Kirdahy and show writers Douglas Carter Beane and Lewis Flinn to develop the new musical *HOOD: A New Robin Hood Musical Adventure*. Artistic Excellence Society support will enhance this large-scale, technically demanding new show for an Asolo Rep premiere, envisioned as the critical first step in bringing this work to future venues.



Top Row: LEFT- Andrea Prestinario in *My Fair Lady*. Photo by Daniel Perales. RIGHT- Cast of *Shakespeare in Love*. Photo by Cliff Rolls.
 Second Row: LEFT- Noah Racey in *PULSE*. Photo by Corey Meade. RIGHT- Justin Gregory Lopez and Ana Isabelle in *EVITA*. Photo by Cliff Rolls.
 Third Row: LEFT- Cast of *Ragtime*. Photo by Cliff Roles. RIGHT- *West Side Story*. Photo by Cliff Roles.
 Bottom Row: LEFT- A.K. Murtadha in *The Great Society*. Photo by Cliff Roles. RIGHT- Jelani Alladin, Dillon Cassidy, and Julian Ramos in *Josephine*. Photo by Paul Tate dePoo III.

2019-20 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

“It is profoundly necessary for a great arts organization to take significant artistic risks. Measuring the success of these risks is not always tangible.

But we know that without thinking outside the box, without embracing new ways of thinking and expressing, without providing a platform for boundary-pushing ideas, we will become ordinary.”

– Michael Donald Edwards

Productions supported by the Artistic Excellence Society in recent years have included:

2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<i>Noah Racey's Pulse</i>	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>	<i>Luck Be A Lady: The Music of Frank Loesser</i>	<i>West Side Story</i>	<i>The Great Society</i>	<i>Evita</i>	<i>The Music Man</i>
	<i>Hero: The Musical</i>	<i>Sotto Voce</i>	<i>All the Way</i>	<i>The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity</i>	<i>Shakespeare in Love</i>	<i>Sweat</i>
			<i>Josephine</i>	<i>Beatsville</i>	<i>Ragtime</i>	<i>Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street</i>



Top Row: Press Conference for Asolo Rep's production of *Show Boat*. Photo by Cliff Roles. Middle Row: LEFT- Asolo Rep Company Members; Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and supporters. Photo by Tricia Mire. RIGHT- Asolo Rep Supporters at an artist reception at the home of Bob and Beverly Barner. Photo by Tricia Mire. Bottom Row: LEFT- Artistic Excellence Society Member George Kole and Asolo Rep Guest Director Peter Amster. Photo by Tricia Mire. RIGHT- Asolo Rep Literary Manager and Dramaturg Paul Adolphsen, Guest Director Rachel Rockwell, Asolo Rep Associate Artistic Director Greg Leaming, Asolo Rep Associate Artist Frank Galati, Asolo Rep Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards, speaking at the 2017 Director's Take Luncheon. Photo by Cliff Roles.

2019-20 BENEFITS**

\$5,000-24,999

- Invitations to Meet & Greets with productions' creative teams, Press Conferences for Asolo Rep's large scale productions, Annual Director's Take Luncheon and other creative conversations and events
- Invitations to Major Donor events including Welcome Back and Season Announcement parties
- Invitations to exclusive opportunities to experience the theatrical process
- Photo recognition in Season Program Book and Lobby Video

\$25,000+

- Includes all \$5,000-\$24,999 benefits
- PLUS–
- Recognition as an Asolo Rep Major Season Supporter
- Private engagement with an Asolo Rep Creative Team Member
- Superior placement and photo size in the Season Program Book and Lobby Video, including a tribute acknowledging your passionate support in the Season Program Book

Asolo Theatre, Inc. is a 501 (C) (3) not-for-profit corporation operating in the state of Florida.

**There are no goods or services attached to a gift to the Artistic Excellence Society. Your gift will be entirely tax deductible.

“One of my most enjoyable experiences this past winter was watching the technical rehearsals. Seeing how much time and detail go into a production, and then going to see the final smooth performance on stage at Asolo Rep opened my eyes to the remarkable amount of work it takes to create a show.”

– Artistic Excellence Society member, Betty-Jean Bavar

If you would like more information on contributing to the Artistic Excellence Society, contact Colton Larsen at 941-351-9010 ext. 4705 OR colton_larson@asolo.org

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2019-20 Asolo Rep productions supported by the Artistic Excellence Society

THE SOUND OF MUSIC

NOVEMBER 16 - DECEMBER 28 • Previews November 13, 14 & 15

Music by **RICHARD RODGERS**

Lyrics by **OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II**

Book by **HOWARD LINDSAY AND RUSSEL CROUSE**

Suggested by *The Trapp Family Singers* by **MARIA AUGUSTA TRAPP**

Directed and choreographed by **JOSH RHODES**

Like a breath of fresh Alpine air, this beloved musical masterpiece sweeps onto the Asolo Rep stage just in time for the holidays. Maria, a young nun causing trouble at the abbey, is sent off to be governess to Captain von Trapp's seven troublesome children. She brings much-needed love and joy to the family – and the widowed Captain – and transforms their world and hers through the power of music. But the looming threat of Nazi Germany's invasion of their native Austria darkens their future. Overflowing with some of the most iconic songs of all time, this heart-warming family musical will be helmed by Josh Rhodes, returning on the heels of his spectacular production of *Evita* in 2017.

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S

MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS

JANUARY 10–MARCH 8 • Previews January 8 & 9

Adapted by **KEN LUDWIG**

Directed by **PETER AMSTER**

Just after midnight, the exotic Orient Express is hurtling down the tracks – to a murder! An American tycoon lies dead in his compartment, his door locked from the inside. With a train full of suspects and an alibi for each one, it's the perfect mystery for the dapper detective Hercule Poirot, n'est-ce pas? Glamorous, romantic and hilarious, this new adaptation of Agatha Christie's masterpiece by two-time Tony®-nominated playwright and farce master Ken Ludwig takes you on a suspenseful, highly entertaining thrill ride. Book your passage today!

THE GREAT LEAP

IN THE COOK THEATRE

MARCH 20-April 12 • Previews March 18 & 19

By **LAUREN YEE**

Director to be Announced

San Francisco, spring 1989. Manford Lum is a sparky kid who plays street basketball in Chinatown – vertically challenged, but with undeniable ball skills. He talks his way onto a college team headed to Beijing for an exhibition game and finds himself in the middle of China's post-Cultural Revolution. As the story bounces between 1989 and 1971, past relationships collide with present day revelations right up to the final buzzer. Smart, feisty and hilarious, *The Great Leap* is about family, history, and learning that every game is a second chance.

HOOD

A NEW ROBIN HOOD MUSICAL ADVENTURE

MAY 15-31 • Previews begin May 6

Book by **DOUGLAS CARTER BEANE**

Music and Lyrics by **LEWIS FLINN**

Directed by **MARK BROKAW**

The world's sexiest thief. The renegade hero who made redistributing wealth cool takes to the stage again in this madcap new musical romp staged by some of Broadway's creative giants. Follow the exciting escapades of Robin and his merry men as he fights to restore justice for the people of Sherwood, win the heart of the beautiful Maid Marian and rid the land from the avaricious Sheriff of Nottingham once and for all. With heaps of audience participation, thrilling sword fights, archery contests, spirited heroes and dastardly villains, this much-loved tale gets an exhilarating 21st-century twist by five-time Tony-nominated playwright Douglas Carter Beane with a folk and rock-infused score by Lewis Flinn.

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Incredible stories. Fresh perspectives. Bold theatre filled with reverberating ideas about the world we share. In 2019-20 we are staging reimagined classics alongside compelling new work. Join us at the theatre!

2019-20

Asolo Repertory Theatre | 5555 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34243 | asolorep.org

03/25/19