

# history theatre

For immediate release:  
June 10, 2016

CONTACT: In-Fin Tuan  
desk: 651.292.4323 x 106  
pr@historytheatre.com

## History Theatre's 2016-2017 Season features 4 world premieres about Minnesota icons, communities, and unsung heroes – and brings back an audience favorite!

SAINT PAUL, MN – History Theatre's 2016-2017 season will include *four world premieres* beginning with Bob Beverage's new musical that explores the musical journey of the rising star Bobby Vee.

The season will take audiences on a journey into the hearts and minds of national icons and trailblazers. We will begin on October 1 with the world premiere of ***Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story***, a new musical written by Bob Beverage with musical arrangements and direction by George Mauer. The musical follows the meteoric rise of Bobby Velline who performed at the Winter Dance Party in Moorhead, MN the day the musical died and later would become a teen idol recording many Top 40 hits. Then the holidays will herald the return of the History Theatre classic ***Orphan Train*** November 19. This timeless story of family told with humor and love will feature Norah Long and T. Mychael Rambo.

2017 will kick off with the annual RAW STAGES New Works Festival in January (dates and titles will be announced in July). February 4 will see the world premiere of ***The Highwaymen***. Jerome Fellow Josh Wilder has crafted a searing look at the price of progress that destroyed the once thriving, tight-knit Rondo neighborhood to make way for the construction of Interstate-94. He will team up director Jamil Jude and a cast featuring Kris Nelson (*Wellstone!*), Jim Detmar (*Lombardi*), Penumbra's Kevin West and The Guthrie's Nat Fuller to bring this story to life. In March, History Theatre will premiere ***The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin*** (opens March 18) by local playwright Jessica Huang. This haunting, poetic journey of secrets, identity and family follows the true story of Harry Chin, one of the many Chinese nationals who landed in the U.S. through a loophole in the Chinese Exclusion Act.

The final show of the season is a new musical about the American immigrant experience. Written by Perrin Post and Laurie Flanigan-Hegge with music by Dina Maccabee, ***Sweet Land, the musical***, (opens April 29) is a poignant, lyrical celebration of hard-won celebration of land, love and the American immigrant experience.

Performances are generally scheduled for Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, at 7:30 p.m., Sundays and select Saturdays at 2:00 p.m., and most Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. (All titles and performance times are subject to change.) Season passes for the 2016-2017 season are on sale now. Single tickets for all performances will go on sale to the general public July 13, 2016. Discounts on single tickets and season passes are available for Seniors (age 60+) and Young Adults (19-30 years). Student tickets (18 years and under) are always \$15 for all performances. Additional discounts for all performances are available for groups of 10 or more. More information is available by calling the History Theatre box office at **651-292-4323** or going online to **www.historytheatre.com**.

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## History Theatre's 2016-2017 Season:

### Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story

October 1-30, 2016

By Bob Beverage | Directed by Ron Peluso

Musical arrangements by George Mauer | Musical direction by George Mauer

1959. With the tragic crash of Buddy Holly's plane, a bright new star from Fargo emerged. Fifteen-year-old Bobby Velline performed at the Winter Dance Party in Moorhead, MN the day the music died. Bobby went on to record his first hit single, *Suzie Baby*, in Minneapolis - and soon would become a teen idol appearing on American Bandstand with Dick Clark and an international star who thrilled audiences for more than a decade with Top 40 hits like *Devil or Angel*, *The Night Has A Thousand Eyes*, *Come Back When You Grow Up Girl* and many more. Follow Bobby's musical journey that includes fellow pop stars like Little Anthony & The Imperials, Ronnie & The Ronettes, Dion, and Del Shannon.

*Featuring Ivey-Award Winners Tyler Michaels as Bobby Vee; Ben Bakken as Del Shannon*

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### Orphan Train

November 19-December 18, 2016

Story & Book by Patty Lynch Music & Lyrics by Charlie Maguire

Directed by Ron Peluso and Anya Kremenetsky | Choreography by Regina Peluso

Musical arrangements by Richard Kriehn | Musical direction by Andrew Fleser

1889. Over 100,000 orphaned children were shipped by rail from the slums of New York City to farm families in the Midwest between 1858 and 1929. *Orphan Train* brings to life the struggles and joys of the children who landed in Minnesota and the families who took them in. This stirring folk musical follows a handful of children – a brother and sister who were separated, a tough boy and a spirited girl whose courage soars in the face of adversity, and an African-American girl who finds love in the home of a Buffalo Soldier's family. Don't miss this new look at a History Theatre classic that will tug at your heartstrings and entertain audiences of all ages with humor and love.

*Featuring Norah Long and T. Mychael Rambo*

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### The Highwaymen

February 4-26, 2017

by Josh Wilder | directed by Jamil Jude

1956. The construction of Interstate 94 destroyed the thriving, tight-knit Rondo neighborhood where homes, stores and businesses once stood. The new freeway tore through the heart of St. Paul's largest African-American community. This powerful new drama explores the dynamics surrounding the decision-making process that shattered the lives of thousands of middle-class residents and changed the face of St. Paul forever.

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## **The Things They Carried**

February 13-23, 2017

Adapted for stage by Jim Stowell

Based on the quintessential book about the Vietnam experience, Pearce Bunting (*Radio Man*) plays Tim O'Brien, whose personal journey took him from Macalester College to the jungles of Vietnam and back. *The Things They Carried* is a powerful, clever, and provocative story of loss and redemption.

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## **The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin**

March 18-April 9, 2017

By Jessica Huang | Directed by Mei Ann Teo

1939. Follow the true story of Harry Chin, one of the many Chinese nationals who landed in the U.S. through a loophole in the Chinese Exclusion Act. Haunted by the ghosts of his past and provoked by the curiosity of his daughter, Harry is forced to confront his buried secrets. Through leaps of time and space, we experience the abhorrent conditions at Seattle Immigration Station, Harry's longing for the life he left in China, and the complications of love in a new land. Jessica Huang's powerful new drama explores the personal and political repercussions of making a group of people "illegal."

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## **Sweet Land, the musical**

April 29-May 28, 2017

Book by Perrin Post | Lyrics & Book by Laurie Flanigan-Hegge

Music by Dina Maccabee | Directed by Perrin Post

Choreography by Joe Chvala | Music Arrangements by Robert Elhai

Musical Direction by Jason Hansen

1920. Inge Altenberg journeys to America to marry a bachelor farmer, sight unseen. But in the wake of WWI, Inge's German heritage turns her new neighbors against the match. Under cathedral skies, the determined young immigrant and her stoic farmer fight for their lives, facing their own misgivings and the harshness of an unforgiving land. A lyrical celebration of hard-won independence and a reflection of generations past, *Sweet Land* reminds us of who we are - and where we came from.

*Featuring Ann Michels and Robert Berdahl*

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January 2017

## **RAW STAGES: New Works Festival**

Titles, playwrights, and directors will be announced and posted online after July 1, 2016.

The RAW STAGES Festival will consist of four readings of scripts-in-progress featuring professional actors and directors. The readings will be performed History Theatre, 30 E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, St. Paul.

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*(Please note that dates are subject to change.)*



Telling the stories of Minnesota, the Midwest  
and the American Experience for 36+ years

## OUR MISSION

History Theatre entertains, educates, and inspires through creating, developing, and producing new and existing works that explore Minnesota's past and the diverse American experience. Its work provides a unique lens which links our past to the present, explores our common heritage, and illuminates our understanding of what it means to be American. History Theatre is a three-time IVEY Award-winning theater, and is recognized nationally as a leader in producing historical work.

## THE ARTISTIC WORK

Each year History Theatre produces a season filled with excellent plays and musicals while developing new scripts through workshops and staged readings. Since 1978, the company has staged 116 world premieres, working with nationally recognized playwrights such as Jeffrey Hatcher, Kevin Kling, Eric Simonson, Craig Wright, Frank McCourt, Doris Baizley, Melanie Marnich, Kim Hines, John Olive, and Kira Obolensky. From a charming look at the innocence of youth in *Coco's Diary* to an urban musical celebration of the Twin Cities in *Snapshots: Life in the City*, and from the music of the iconic Judy Garland in *Beyond the Rainbow* to the an exploration of one of the most pivotal years in modern history in *1968: The Year That Rocked the World*, History Theatre moves audiences to rediscover, reexamine, and respect every piece of their history.

For more about History Theatre,  
visit [www.HistoryTheatre.com/about](http://www.HistoryTheatre.com/about)

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**ACCESSIBILITY:** History Theatre is equipped with an FM hearing enhancement system. Large-print and braille playbills are available at the box office. We offer ASL interpreted and Audio Described performances. We have complimentary wheelchairs for those patrons who need extra assistance into the building. The handicap-accessible entrance is on Cedar St. Just inside the entrance is an elevator that will take patrons to the theatre level.

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