



Douglas Morrisson Theatre

22311 N. Third St.
Hayward, CA
(510) 881-6777
www.dmtonline.org

Mailing address:
Theatre, c/o H.A.R.D.
1099 E Street
Hayward, CA
94541

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Media contact: George Ledo
Media phone: (510) 881-6777
Email: gled@dmtonline.org

DOUGLAS MORRISSON THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2012 SEASON, “FAMILY PORTRAITS”

Hayward theatre’s 33rd year features a Northern California premiere, two timeless American classics, and the Tony Award-winning musical *Grey Gardens*.

December 16, 2011 – The Douglas Morrisson Theatre (DMT) proudly announces a new year of award-winning plays on the theme of “Family Portraits.” The season will begin in February with the Northern California premiere of Horton Foote’s trenchant comedy *Dividing the Estate*, directed by DMT’s new Artistic Director Susan E. Evans. Next up, in June, is a revival of the poignant Southern classic, *The Member of the Wedding* by Carson McCullers. In September, DMT will present the quirky Broadway musical *Grey Gardens*, winner of three Tony Awards in 2007, and, closing out the season in November, will be an American masterpiece, Arthur Miller’s powerful morality play *All My Sons*.

“This coming year will mark DMT’s 33rd year,” Evans said. “I am thrilled to be coming aboard at this point in its history, and to create a new season filled with amazing plays about American families, warts and all. These are plays that will truly enlighten, enrich and challenge our audiences.”

The theatre made a tough decision for the new season. “We decided to keep our subscription prices exactly the same as last year,” Evans said. “We believe that live theatre should be accessible and affordable to everyone, especially nowadays, so we’re hoping this will help a lot of people continue to attend our performances. We will also be offering discounted Thursday evening previews of all four shows.”

In addition to the main season, each of the four shows will have one special Saturday matinee performance where the audience will have the opportunity to chat with the actors and directors. The theatre will also introduce “Bare Bones Tuesdays,” a series of four staged readings of contemporary plays which complement the theatre season.

The Douglas Morrisson Theatre is located at 22311 N. Third St. in Hayward, next to the Senior Center and the Japanese Gardens. The Box Office is open Tuesday through Friday, 12:30 to 5:30 and can be reached at (510) 881-6777. Information is also available at www.dmtonline.org.

The Douglas Morrisson Theatre is owned and operated by the Hayward Area Recreation and Park District, and is funded by the property taxes of the people who live in the Hayward, Castro Valley, and San Lorenzo areas, as well as other portions of unincorporated Alameda County. First named “The Little Theatre” at its dedication on November of 1978, the theatre opened its doors in January of 1979 with a production of the Rodgers and Hammerstein classic, *The King and I*. The theatre operated under The Little Theatre name until 2003 when it was renamed the Douglas Morrisson Theatre.



The Douglas Morrisson
Theatre is a program
and facility of the
Hayward Area
Recreation and Park
District

INFORMATION ON THE 2012 SEASON:

A darkly comic portrait of a rapacious Texan clan, *Dividing the Estate*, by prolific playwright Horton Foote, premiered in 1989, and 18 years later opened in New York to critical acclaim. In his article, "Political Theater with Iced Tea and a Drawl," Charles Isherwood of the *NY Times* wrote of the 2007 production, "And yet, by golly, Mr. Foote's pungent comedy *Dividing the Estate* is in my view among the most acute — not to mention hilarious — analyses of flaws in the American psyche in the 21st century that the theater has come up with to date." It's 1987 in Harrison, Texas, and the Gordons have fallen on hard times, what with the 80s oil bust. Mama's dead set against splitting up the 100-year old estate, but her children have other plans as they gather round the dining table to squabble about their righteous share of the pie.

Directed by Artistic Director Susan E. Evans

The Member of the Wedding is Carson McCuller's poignant coming-of-age story adapted from her own novel. The play opened on Broadway in 1950, winning the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for best play. An eloquent character sketch of adolescent dreams, growing up, and letting go, the play is frequently revived. Twelve-year old tomboy Frankie is restless and lonely. Playing three-handed bridge with her six-year old cousin and the family cook, she dreams of escaping the Georgia heat with her big brother and his fiancée, and becoming "the *we* of me." Of the 2007 production at the Young Vic in London *The Independent* asserted: "Imagine a great Chekhov story crossed with a Tennessee Williams play and you'll have some notion of the warm brilliance of *The Member of the Wedding* by Carson McCullers."

Directed by Eric Fraisher Hayes

Winner of three Tony Awards in 2007, *Grey Gardens* is the serio-comic musical version of the 1975 documentary about Edith Ewing Bouvier Beale, and her daughter, Edith Bouvier Beale, the aunt and cousin of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, and their weirdly fascinating and haunting relationship. *Grey Gardens* follows the lives of "Big Edie" and "Little Edie," from their 1941 glory days in New York high society to 1973, after decades of a reclusive, eccentric existence together at Grey Gardens, the dilapidated squalid family mansion overrun with cats and raccoons. "To listen to *Grey Gardens* is to bring to mind two phrases seldom linked nowadays: 'Broadway musical' and 'artistic integrity,'" wrote Stephen Holden in *The New York Times*. "The score is a meticulously fashioned piece of musical theater that gains in depth the more you listen to it." Directed by Michael D. Ryken

"I'm his father and he's my son, and if there's something bigger than that I'll put a bullet in my head!" shouts Joe Keller in *All My Sons*, an electrifying drama about capitalism, greed and moral responsibility. Keller's factory sent faulty airplane parts overseas during the war and his business partner is in prison for the crime. The Keller's younger son never returned from a flight mission years earlier, but Mrs. Keller refuses to believe he's gone. Now the older son is starting to romance his brother's fiancée. In just one climactic night a heartrending family secret, or two, is revealed. Miller won Best Author in 1947 for *All My Sons*: its themes are enduring and timeless. In his review of the 2010 revival, Michael Billington of the *Guardian* observed, "Miller's play is a portrait of a society as well as of a flawed individual ... the power of the production lies in the stripping away of protective illusion." Directed by Artistic Director Susan E. Evans

2012 SEASON SCHEDULE:

Dividing the Estate

Northern California premiere

Written by Horton Foote

Directed by DMT Artistic Director Susan E. Evans

Preview: February 23, 2012

February 24-March 18, 2012

Opening night: February 24, 2012

The Member of the Wedding

Written by Carson McCullers

Directed by Eric Fraisher Hayes

Preview: June 7, 2012

June 8 – July 1, 2012

Opening night: June 8, 2012

Grey Gardens

Tony Award winning musical

Book by Doug Wright

Music by Scott Frankel

Lyrics by Michael Korie

Directed by Michael D. Ryken

Preview: September 6, 2012

September 7 - September 30, 2012

Opening night: September 7, 2012

All My Sons

Written by Arthur Miller

Directed by DMT Artistic Director Susan E. Evans

Preview: November 15, 2012

November 16-December 9, 2012

Opening night: November 16, 2012

Bare Bones Tuesdays

Four staged readings

January 10, 2012

Drunken City by Adam Bock

Directed by Dale Albright

April 3, 2012

Looking for Normal by Jane Anderson

Directed by Marilyn Langbehn

August 7, 2012

Broke-ology by Nathan Louis Jackson

October 9, 2012: TBA