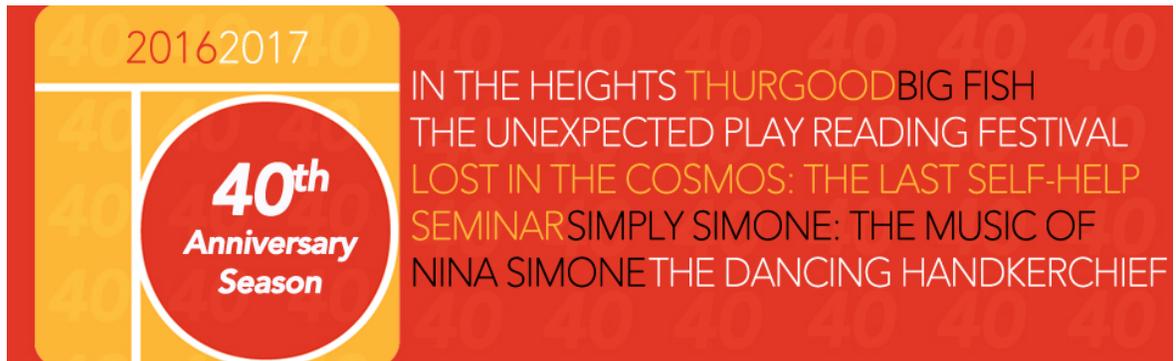




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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Announcing our 40th ANNIVERSARY SEASON! 2016-2017 A SEASON OF HOPE

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, **hope** for tomorrow."
– Albert Einstein

Theatrical Outfit continues its vision of creating compassion – one story at a time – by starting the conversations that matter. From Tony-winning musical, to enlightening one-man show, to a family-friendly alternative to the usual holiday fare, to a zany trip into the self-help cosmos, to a musical tribute to an icon, to a world premiere magical puppet extravaganza with music by our industry's hottest songwriter, to four unexpected play readings, our **2016-2017 Season of Hope** truly offers something for everyone!

Why "Hope"? "Hope is tough to achieve and even tougher to sustain. We all want it. We all need it. It's impossible to have it or to keep it on our own. Hope for our world begins with the human longing for connection. When we gather in a theater to hear the story of our neighbor, of the stranger, of our lover, of our friend or of our enemy, and, in the end, understand better who we really are; then, that hope begins within us that can create a global community. Be part of a better future. Be part of what's great. Join us for our Season of Hope." – Tom Key, Artistic Director

IN THE HEIGHTS

at the Rialto Center for the Arts
September 8 – 18, 2016
Co-production with Aurora Theatre

Book by Quiara Alegria Hudes
Music and Lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda
Conceived by Lin-Manuel Miranda
Directed by Justin Anderson
Musical Direction by Ann-Carol Pence
Choreography by Ricardo Aponte

Before *Hamilton* reinvented musical theatre, its creator, superstar Lin-Manuel Miranda, wowed Broadway with *In the Heights*, a universal story celebrating New York's Washington Heights, where the corner bodega coffee is sweet, neighbors' windows stay open, and the air pulsates with salsa, soul and hip-hop. A charismatic storeowner, full of **hope**, dreams and a gift for storytelling, guides us through the lives of three generations who must choose between tradition and their future. Best Musical Tony Award winner!

"*In the Heights* is the *West Side Story* for a new generation!" — *Time Magazine*

THURGOOD

at the Balzer Theater at Herren's
September 29 – October 16, 2016

By George Stevens, Jr.
Directed by Eric Little

Based on the life and career of the first African-American Supreme Court Justice, this riveting narrative charts Thurgood Marshall's evolution from back-alley Baltimore, to Howard University law school, to his fight for equality in the South, all the way to a seat on the highest court in the land in 1967. In addition to his victorious challenge of segregation in *Brown vs. Board of Education*, humorous and inspiring milestones of Marshall's journey reveal the remarkable brilliance, perseverance and **hope** of one of the greatest American heroes of all time.

"If the curriculum in the schools were presented with half as much personality, the gaps in our knowledge wouldn't be so pronounced." — *The L.A. Times*

BIG FISH

at The Balzer Theater at Herren's
November 17 – December 18, 2016

Book by John August
Music and Lyrics by Andrew Lippa (*A Little Princess*, *The Addams Family*)
Based on the novel by Daniel Wallace and the Columbia Motion Picture
Directed by Tom Key
Choreography by Ricardo Aponte

Inspired by the novel and hit Tim Burton film, *Big Fish* spotlights Edward Bloom, a traveling salesman whose biggest **hope** is to live life to its fullest. Edward's tall-tales thrill everyone in earshot except his questioning son Will, about to be a father himself, who demands to know the truth behind Dad's epic stories of giants, fortune-telling witches and mermaids. Full of heart, humor and inventive stagecraft, *Big Fish* offers an experience only theatre can – one that's richer, funnier and bigger than life itself.

"Remarkable! A show for everyone who loves musicals. Don't dare miss this!" — *Variety*

LOST IN THE COSMOS: THE LAST SELF-HELP SEMINAR

at The Balzer Theater at Herren's
February 9-26, 2017

By National Book Award winner, Walker Percy
Adapted for the stage by Tom Key

If Earthlings zoomed to a planet with intelligent life, would they let us land or label us a threat to a more-evolved universe? Walker Percy pondered such existential "what ifs" in *Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self Help Book*. The Outfit's Artistic Director, Tom Key, deftly re-imagines Percy's opus as a soul-searching seminar where cheeky group leaders hilariously suggest alternatives to our everyday behavior. A wry and **hopeful** meditation on our obsessions with reality TV and politics, horoscopes and how-to guides, *Lost in the Cosmos* engages the mind, soul and funny bone.

"Its sly humor shows us strategies for solidifying and shoring up our tenuous selves." — NPR

SIMPLY SIMONE: THE MUSIC OF NINA SIMONE

at The Balzer Theater at Herren's
March 23 – April 15, 2017

By Robert Neblett and David Grapes
Musical Arrangements by Vince diMura
Directed and Choreographed by Patdro Harris

Prodigy. Superstar. Activist. Exile. One of the true divas of the 20th century, vocal powerhouse Nina Simone defied classification and defined a generation. This musical revue lays bare the rich legacy of an American icon whose work spans genres from jazz to gospel to blues to Broadway to rock and roll and features such definitive classics as "I Loves You Porgy," "The Look of Love," "My Baby Just Cares for Me," and "Here Comes the Sun." Heart-melting and **hopeful**, Simone's spellbinding voice comes alive via four actresses in this incredibly soulful theatrical journey.

"An intriguing glimpse into the life of one of our most fascinating talents." — *Buffalo News*

THE DANCING HANDKERCHIEF

at The Balzer Theater at Herren's
June 1 – June 18, 2017

Co-production with Flying Carpet Theatre Company
Starring Theatrical Outfit Artistic Director, Tom Key
Story by Geoff Sobelle (*The Object Lesson*) and Adam Koplan
Music and Lyrics by Robert Lopez (*Avenue Q*, *Frozen*, *The Book of Mormon*)
Directed by Adam Koplan

Part magic act, part musical, part puppet show, this world premiere with early songs by Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony-winner Robert Lopez, tells the story of Mysterioso the Magician and his curious child Bastienne who, through an epic separation and reunion, learn to see each other in a truer, **hope**-filled light. A Balladeer sings delightful tunes that paint a comic and fantastical world inhabited by a beckoning handkerchief, an otherworldly suitcase, magical creatures and one gigantic, ravenous rabbit. A unique hybrid theatrical extravaganza, *The Dancing Handkerchief* will mesmerize patrons small and tall.

THE UNEXPECTED PLAY READING FESTIVAL

at The Balzer Theater at Herren's
January 21-22, 2017

Welcome to our first festival of play readings. Witness top notch talent bring characters and plots to vivid life as four new or *new-ish* scripts not only stir the soul but maybe even unsettle it. Think of it as T.O. Stage 2 - unpredictable and exciting fare that stretches The Outfit aesthetic in either content or form. Preview tomorrow's hit play, and engage with the artists and staff at our Playwriting Panel and reception. Buckle up. Titles to be announced in the summer of 2016.

Please note: Season Subject to Change

TICKETS: Subscription packages – \$68-\$246 – are on sale now. Single tickets – \$20-\$50 – go on sale July 12, 2016. 678.528.1500. www.theatricaloutfit.org/season-subscriptions. Tickets for the New Play Festival are \$10 per reading or \$35 for a four play package. Titles to be announced in the summer of 2016.

ABOUT THEATRICAL OUTFIT: Atlanta's second-oldest continually-operating professional theatre company was founded in 1976 and has been led by Artistic Director Tom Key since fall 1995. Key led the company through the creation of its award-winning downtown home, the Balzer Theater at Herren's, the first U.S. theater to achieve LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. The Balzer Theater is also the historical site of Herren's, the first restaurant in Atlanta to voluntarily desegregate in 1962; its first African American patrons, Dr. Lee and Delores Shelton, remain Theatrical Outfit patrons and season ticket subscribers. Key's programming of classics, regional and world premieres tell **soul-stirring stories**, with themes that explore diversity, equality, ethnicity, race, and religion; and often feature the best writers of the American South, including Ernest Gaines, Lauren Gunderson, Horton Foote, Harper Lee, Flannery O'Connor, Janece Shaffer, Sherry Shephard-Massat, Elyzabeth Gregory Wilder and Tennessee Williams. After ten years of capital investment, T.O. is in new territory. Having retired its mortgage, staff, trustees and artists are in the midst of a 2014-17 Strategic Plan designed to expand mission-driven, artistic

offerings of genres ranging from dramas and comedies to large scale musicals, engaging many more of Atlanta's world class theatre artists. The plan now has the benefit of two leaders, Artistic Director, Tom Key and Managing Director, Lee Foster, hired in June 2014, who together have achieved the theatre's most successful season of ticket sales since the 2005 opening of The Balzer Theater at Herren's and the most Suzi Bass Award Nominations for one season ever garnered by Theatrical Outfit.

ABOUT OUR VENUE: All shows, excluding IN THE HEIGHTS (at the Rialto Center for the Arts, 80 Forsyth St NW, Atlanta, GA 30303), are performed at The Balzer Theater at Herren's at 84 Luckie Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30303. Theatrical Outfit utilizes a Loop Listening System, making The Balzer Theater at Herren's the first theater in the state of Georgia to incorporate this technology. Attendees with T-coil hearing aids may participate automatically, and others needing enhancement may obtain system-compatible headsets from our lobby Box Office.

Front Desk and Box Office: 678.528.1500. Online at: www.theatricaloutfit.org.

OUR VISION: Creating compassion — one story at a time.

OUR MISSION: Starting the conversations that matter.