

THE MIDNIGHT COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2021 SEASON

The Midnight Company will present four plays in 2021, including two St. Louis Premieres and one World Premiere. The Company, which presented the only live theatre in town during the pandemic with Eric Bogosian's *SEX, DRUGS, ROCK & ROLL* in November 2020, and mindful of the fears and realities of the ongoing virus war, will open the season with two one-man plays in June and July.

Midnight's Artistic Director Joe Hanrahan said, "Last November, we worked with the State's MissouriArtSafe program, the City of St. Louis and the Kranzberg organization to make sure all safety guidelines were in place and being followed. We'll be doing the same going forward, hoping that vaccine efforts will continue to positively affect quality of life, enabling us to provide quality theatrical experiences for our audiences."

Hanrahan also said, "If there's a theme to this season, with theatre coming back it's appropriate that these shows deal with the theatre and show business. While *HERE LIES HENRY* focuses on the Art and Science of Lying (particularly relevant to this age of political and societal falsehoods), but Marlon Brando did say 'Acting is lying for a living.' Our second show, *NOW PLAYING THIRD BASE...* specifically occurs during a young man's introduction to live theatre, of a sort. *IT IS MAGIC*, our third show, actually takes place during auditions in the basement of a theatre, and *TINSEL TOWN*, the season closer, tells three stories set in the Los Angeles entertainment world."

The Company opens with *HERE LIES HENRY* by Daniel MacIvor, June 10-27 at the Kranzberg Black Box. It will be directed by Ellie Schwetye, with Joe Hanrahan as Henry, a man in a room with a mission to tell you something you don't already know. He's also a liar. Midnight has presented two plays by MacIvor (a celebrated Canadian writer/performer) including *CUL-DE-SAC*, and then *HOUSE* at the 2015 St. Louis Fringe. Hanrahan performed both one-man shows, and critics said " *CUL-DE-SAC* takes you places you may not want to go. But Hanrahan makes a spellbinding guide." (Calvin Wilson, St. Louis Post-Dispatch) and " *HOUSE* is a perfect combination of virtuoso acting and compelling storytelling." (Chuck Lavazzi, KDHX.) Tickets for *HERE LIES HENRY*, a St. Louis Premiere, will go on sale May 10 at [MetroTix.com](https://www.metrotix.com), and prices, performances, capacity and safety procedures will be announced at that time.

Midnight will then present the rescheduled (from 2020) *NOW PLAYING THIRD BASE FOR THE ST. LOUIS CARDINALS...BOND, JAMES BOND*, written and performed by Joe Hanrahan, directed by Shane Signorino, with video design by Michael B. Perkins. It will run July 8-23 at The Chapel. First presented at the St. Louis Fringe in 2018, the script has been expanded, and Hanrahan said, "The Fringe version of this show had to come in under an hour. This version, with additional material, should be deeper, hopefully richer." *NOW PLAYING...* is a memory show, of when a teen was introduced, in an unusual way, to live theatre, while the rest of life, including baseball, James Bond, racism, The Beatles, the assassination of John F. Kennedy and more swirled around him. Michelle Kenyon in Snoop's Theatre Thoughts called the play "...entertaining, educational, thought-provoking..." and also said it was "...difficult to describe, but what it is is excellent."

In October, Hanrahan's short play *PATIENT #47* will be presented as part of True Community Theatre's *TRUTH, LIES, and CONFESSIONS* October 1-3 at The Chapel. *PATIENT #47* was originally presented at the 2019 Theatre Crawl

And later in the month, Midnight will begin to add additional performers to their cast lists.

Midnight will present Mickie Maher's *IT IS MAGIC*, also rescheduled from 2020, directed by Suki Peters, October 21-November 6 at the Kranzberg Black Box. *IT IS MAGIC* takes place in the basement of a community theatre. Two sisters, tireless long-term theatre volunteers but ignored in the artistic process, have finally received their chance to write and act for the group. While opening night of the company's Scottish Play goes on in the MainStage above them, they're holding auditions for the role of the Big Bad Wolf for their new script, an adult version of *THREE LITTLE PIGS*. But an inebriated, jaded artistic director and an unexpected, wild Third Sister intrude, delivering dire changes, dangerous chaos and, eventually, magic. The cast for the production includes Nicole Angeli, Michelle Hand, Joe Hanrahan, Britteny Henry and Carl Overly. Chicago's Third Coast Review called *IT IS MAGIC* "...one of those love letters to theatre...delightfully wacky," and New City Stage in Chicago said "Any show that juggles loving critics with tearing their throats out is good in my book." Midnight has previously presented Maher's *THE HUNCHBACK VARIATIONS* and *AN APOLOGY FOR THE COURSE OF CERTAIN EVENTS AS DELIVERED BY DOCTOR JOHN FAUSTUS ON THIS HIS FINAL EVENING* (twice each), and *IT IS MAGIC* will be a St. Louis Premiere.

And rounding out the year (and rounding out a cycle of plays from three St. Louis theatre artists) is the World Premiere of *TINSEL TOWN Three Short Plays - 24 Hours In L.A.* by Joe Hanrahan. It will run December 2-18 at Avatar Studios, a television production studio on the edge of Downtown St. Louis, near Market and Jefferson, and will be directed by Rachel Tibbetts. (Midnight has previously presented *TITLE AND DEED* and *LITTLE THING BIG THING* at Avatar.) In *TINSEL TOWN*, Ellie Schwetye and Hanrahan each play characters in the three plays set in the Los Angeles entertainment world. In *LATE LUNCH ON MELROSE*, Hanrahan is a talent agent trying to convince his movie star client, Schwetye, to accept the new normal. In *JUST OFF SUNSET*, Schwetye is a rock singer/writer who's just finished a frustrating gig at a club, and Hanrahan is a grizzled backup musician who's seen it all in the industry. And in *SHOOT IN SANTA MONICA*, Hanrahan is a British actor brought to Hollywood for a role in a science fiction film, and Schwetye is the director trying to get her first film under her belt.

Hanrahan first worked with Tibbetts when he recruited her to direct an earlier Midnight run of *SEX DRUGS ROCK & ROLL*, after seeing her direction of *BACHELORETTE* for her home company, SATE. Thus began an association between their two companies, with Hanrahan acting in *ONE FLEA SPARE*, *OF MICE AND MEN*, *DOCTOR FAUSTUS* and 2020's *APHRA BEHN FESTIVAL* for SATE; and Schwetye directing *JUDGMENT AT NUREMBERG* (with Tibbetts in the cast) and *A MODEL FOR MATISSE* for Midnight.

But it was during the winter of 2016/2017 that these three did two plays together that demanded a third, sometime in the future, to complete a triptych. At that time, Hanrahan directed Schwetye and Tibbetts in the vampire drama, *CUDDLES*, for SATE, followed by Schwetye directing Tibbetts and Hanrahan in Midnight's Irish thriller, *LITTLE THING BIG THING*. So a third show was needed, with (as *TINSEL TOWN* provides) roles for Schwetye and Hanrahan, and Tibbetts directing.

And thus, the cycle will be complete, and *TINSEL TOWN* will bring Midnight's 2021 season to a close.