



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
AUGUST 2017

Media Contact:  
Shokai Sinclair  
Marketing and communications director  
[shokai@shotgunplayers.org](mailto:shokai@shotgunplayers.org) or 510.692.2354 (cell)

**Shotgun Players presents *Black Rider: The Casting of the Magic Bullets*, directed by Mark Jackson, musical direction by David Möschler, original direction by Robert Wilson, music and lyrics by Tom Waits, text by William S. Burroughs, original musical arrangements by Greg Cohen and Tom Waits, dramaturgy by Wolfgang Wiens**

***Black Rider*, the musical theater masterpiece by Tom Waits, Robert Wilson, and William S. Burroughs, lures Bay Area audiences into a deal with the devil.**

Berkeley, CA – Wilhelm, a lowly clerk, and Käthchen, the daughter of a well to do forester, wish to get married. But Wilhelm must first prove to Käthchen's father that he has the brawny skills of a huntsman. What to do? Along comes Pegleg with an offer he cannot refuse. With music by Tom Waits this adaptation by William S. Burroughs will be a wild ride through a dark and magical forest. Director Mark Jackson comments: "Black Rider is a fairytale for adults about how fear and self-doubt can lead us to sell out our integrity for a shortcut to our hopes and dreams." ***Black Rider* begins previews on Thursday, November 9; opens on Friday, November 17; and runs through Sunday, December 31, 2017, at The Ashby Stage.**

***Black Rider* is the second Waits/Wilson collaboration that Shotgun Players has offered to tempt Bay Area audiences.** Having brought *Woyzeck* to Shotgun in 2012, director Mark Jackson and musical director David Möschler are excited to now bring the *Black Rider* tale to life. Mark Jackson says, "Waits has a sublime messiness to his music and lyrics. Wilson's visual storytelling has an equally sublime precision. Burroughs' sensibility converses perfectly with both. They all share an inspired ability to arrange fragmented language, music, and images into moments that express the deep, eternal truths of our inner emotional experiences."

**A haunting event from the life of William S. Burroughs parallels the story of Wilhem.** In 1952 while drinking with friends, Burroughs asked his wife, Joan Vollmer, to perform their "William Tell" act. She balanced a drink on her head, and Burroughs took aim, accidentally killing her. Years later, Burroughs wrote: "I am forced to the appalling conclusion that I would never have become a writer but for Joan's death, and to a realization of the extent to which this event has motivated and formulated my writing... it brought me in contact with the invader, the Ugly Spirit, and maneuvered me into a lifelong struggle, in which I have had no choice except to write my way out."

More at [shotgunplayers.org/online/blackrider](http://shotgunplayers.org/online/blackrider)

The cast of *Black Rider* features El Beh, Noelle Viñas, Rotimi Agbabiaka\*, Kevin Clarke\*, Elizabeth Carter\*, Grace Ng, Steven Hess, Carolyn Walter, Jacy Burroughs, Travis Kindred, and Joshua Pollock. The creative team features set design by Sean Riley, lighting design by Allen Willner, costume design by Christine Crook, stage management by Nikita Kadam\*, props design by Devon LaBelle, sound design by Matt Stines, and production assistance by Heather Kelly-Laws.

\*Member of the Actors' Equity Association

Shotgun Players  
[1901 Ashby Avenue](http://1901AshbyAvenue.com)  
Berkeley, CA 94703

Tel: 510.841.6500

Email: [info@shotgunplayers.org](mailto:info@shotgunplayers.org)  
Website: [shotgunplayers.org](http://shotgunplayers.org)



## Calendar Listing

**WHAT:** Wilhelm, a lowly clerk, and Käthchen, the daughter of a well to do forester, wish to get married. But Wilhelm must first prove to Käthchen's father that he has the brawny skills of a huntsman. What to do? Along comes Pegleg with an offer he cannot refuse. With music by Tom Waits this adaptation by William S. Burroughs will be a wild ride through a dark and magical forest. Director Mark Jackson comments: "*Black Rider* is a fairytale for adults about how fear and self-doubt can lead us to sell out our integrity for a shortcut to our hopes and dreams."

**WHEN:** Thursday, November 9–Sunday, December 31, 2017

**WHERE:** [The Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley](#)

**TICKET PRICES:** Pay-what-you-can previews: November 9–16. Regular tickets: \$25–\$40. Advance reservations strongly advised. Shows will sell out!

For more information, go to [shotgunplayers.org](http://shotgunplayers.org), email [boxoffice@shotgunplayers.org](mailto:boxoffice@shotgunplayers.org), or call 510.841.6500.

## About Shotgun Players

Shotgun Players is a company of artists determined to create bold, relevant, affordable theatre that inspires and challenges audience and artist alike to re-examine our lives, our community, and the ever-changing world around us. More at [shotgunplayers.org](http://shotgunplayers.org).