



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Shotgun Players presents *The 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

Bay Area musician Josh Pollock works well with what's at hand in *The Black Rider* by Tom Waits.

Berkeley, CA – Mention *The Black Rider* and many people immediately think of Tom Waits; now Bay Area Waits fans will also think of Bay Area musicians you may have heard of—like Josh Pollock and David Möschler. *The Black Rider* is a landmark of popular experimental theater, yanking the musical theatre genre into a carnival nightmare. The story: 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: "The 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." ***The Black Rider* begins previews on Thursday, November 9; opens on Friday, November 17; and runs through Sunday, December 31, 2017, at The Ashby Stage.**

***The Black Rider* is the second Waits musical to tempt Bay Area audiences to Shotgun Players with music directed by David Möschler and performed by Josh Pollock.** 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." During *Woyzeck*, lead musician Josh Pollock experimented with a wide range of "musical instruments" that happened to be in the Shotgun Players rehearsal space—a filing cabinet—for instance. *Woyzeck* was named one of the top ten productions in 2012 with the SF Chronicle describing the production as: "One of the most exciting productions of the year... a major achievement."

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(BREAK IT DOWN.)

With *The Black Rider*, Josh Pollock will be creating a whole new range of engagement activities to explore the thorny question of compromising your ideals—or literally changing who you are—in order to gain love, fame, or fortune. The music of the play is both abrasive and seductive. Who will be able to resist the charm—and the offer—of *The Black Rider*?

More at shotgunplayers.org/online/blackrider.

The cast of *The Black Rider* features **Rotimi Agbabiaka***, **El Beh**, **Elizabeth Carter***, **Kevin Clarke***, **Steven Hess**, **Grace Ng**, and **Noelle Viñas**.

The band features **Jacy Burroughs** (Horn, Trombone), **Travis Kindred** (Tuba, Double Bass, Ukulele), **David Möschler** (Piano, Harmonium, Toy Piano), **Josh Pollock** (Electric Guitar, Vibraphone, Pressure-Cap, Marimba, Metal Cart, Toy Drum Set, Filing Cabinet), and **Carolyn Walter** (Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Tenor Sax, Ocarina).

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

Featured Musician Bios

Josh Pollock

With a discography going back to 1993, Josh Pollock is an award-winning actor, composer, and prolific musician who has performed all over the world, in about 4,000 bands, and in collaborations with the likes of John Cale, Flea, Acid Mothers Temple, Van Dyke Parks, and Jandek, among others. Current musical projects include Foxtails Brigade, The Lake Millions, 3 Leafs, and DJ Female Convict Scorpion, but this list could go on, forever. Previous Shotgun appearances include *Woyzeck*, *Beardo*, and *God's Plot*.

[Joshpollockinc.com](http://joshpollockinc.com)

David Möschler

David Möschler is an award-winning Bay Area conductor, musical director, and lecturer. He has conducted over 100 different theater productions throughout the country, with *The Black Rider* marking his fourth Shotgun Players production. In addition to theatrical adventures, Möschler has served as faculty and guest lecturer at many institutions. In 2013, he founded the Awesöme Orchestra Collective, which has been featured on over a dozen studio recordings and hold free Bay Area performances every month.

Tom Waits

Tom Waits, according to American critic Robert Hilburn, is "clearly one of the most important figures of the modern pop era." For over 30 years, his music has taken adventurous turns, from confessional country-blues and jazz-flavored lounge, to primal rock and avant-garde musical theater. His songs explore the dark underbelly of society as he gives his uniquely human voice to adventurers both romantic and mercenary, drifters, con

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artists and those forgotten characters on the fringe and in the fray. Waits has expanded and drawn from a deep well of American and European song idioms: folk, blues, country, jazz ballads, polkas, waltzes, cabaret, swing, popular ballads, and a category that can only be described as Waitsian.

In the early '70s, Tom Waits was working as a doorman at the Heritage nightclub in San Diego, where artists of every genre performed. Waits began developing his own idiosyncratic musical style, combining song and monologue. He took his newly formed act to Monday nights at the Troubadour in Los Angeles, where musicians from all over stood in line all day to get the opportunity to perform on-stage that night. Shortly thereafter, Waits was signed to Asylum Records. He was 21 years old.

Waits' first formal recording, *Closing Time* was released in 1973. Subsequent albums include: *The Heart of Saturday Night* (1974), *Nighthawks at the Diner* (1975), *Small Change* (1976), *Foreign Affairs* (1977), *Blue Valentine* (1978), *Heartattack and Vine* (1980), *Rain Dogs* (1985), *Frank's Wild Years* (1987), *Big Time* (1988), *Bone Machine* (1992), *The Black Rider* (1993), *Mule Variations* (1999), *Used Songs* (2001), *Alice* (2002), *Real Gone* (2004), *Orphans* (2006), *Glitter and Doom Live* (2009), *Bad As Me* (2011)

tomwaits.com

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: "*The 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, email 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.

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