



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Shotgun Players presents *Arcadia*, written by Tom Stoppard, directed by Patrick Dooley

"Arcadia highlights the ephemeral nature of love and life. Objects are constant, but people are inconstant—or at least inconsistent. So we kind of screw up the formula for the universe."

—Patrick Dooley, *Arcadia* director & Shotgun Players Founding Artistic Director

Berkeley, CA – The extent to which we are able to address life's obstacles in an open and honest way is directly related to our ability to manifest our highest calling and most noble purpose—to love. Set on a country estate between 1809 and the late 20th century, Stoppard's masterpiece explores mathematics, landscape gardening, Byron, and the undeniable power of the human heart. ***Arcadia* begins previews on Friday, November 30; opens on Friday, December 7; and runs through Sunday, January 6, 2019, at the Ashby Stage.**

Shotgun Players' Founding Artistic Director, Patrick Dooley, vividly remembers watching a production of *Arcadia*. He was astounded not only with Stoppard's ability to explore human nature, but also with the way in which he uses metaphors such as jam mixed in porridge to explain the complexity of astrophysics. It was his first experience as an audience member with Tom Stoppard. In 2012, he embarked upon our ambitious journey with Stoppard's *The Coast of Utopia* trilogy. Mr. Dooley spent three years with a cast of 30 actors to bring the epic to life. Yet it is *Arcadia* that has always drawn Mr. Dooley not only to the works of Tom Stoppard, but also to the power of live theatre.

On a country estate in Derbyshire, *Arcadia* moves fluidly between events in 1809 and the late 20th century inhabitants who are eager to discover what really happened in the past. We begin in 1809 where we will meet Thomasina, a teenager and mathematical prodigy who works with her tutor Septimus. Yet we learn there are many secrets within the family on the estate. When the story moves to the 1990s, a group of scholars visit to unearth the past. Was Lord Byron actually a guest? Why is there a hermitage on the estate? Scenes move fluidly between past and present, with an increasing reminder to cherish our time together. It's Stoppard at his best.

Author Brad Leithauer described the brilliance of *Arcadia* in an article for the *New Yorker* in 2013: "One sign of *Arcadia's* greatness is how assuredly it blends its disparate chemicals, creating a compound of most peculiar properties. The play's ingredients include sexual jealousy and poetasters and the gothic school of landscape gardening and dueling and chaos theory and botany and the perennial war between Classical and Romantic aesthetics and the maturing of mathematical prodigies. I've been emphasizing the play's lightness and humor; it contains an extraordinarily rich concentration of wordplay and loopy misunderstandings while trafficking in those staples of farce, silly costumes, and mistaken identities."

The cast of *Arcadia* features **Gabriel Christian, Justin DuPuis, Jessma Evans, Max Forman-Mullin, Dean Koya, Aaron Murphy, Adam Niemann, Danielle O'Hare, Amanda Ramos, Gianna DiGregorio Rivera, and David Sinaiko**. The creative team features set design by **Deanna Zibello**, lighting design by **Sarina Renteria**, costume design by **Brooke Jennings**, costume design assistance by **Kathleen Qiu**, choreography by **Allison Paraiso**, assistant direction by **Perry Fenton**, stage management by **Heather Kelly-Laws**, props design by **Devon LaBelle**, sound design by **Cliff Caruthers**, dialect coaching by **Lynne Soffer**, and production assistance by **Liz Johnson**.

More at shotgunplayers.org/online/article/arcadia.

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Playwright Bio

Tom Stoppard

Sir Tom Stoppard was born Tomáš Straußler July 3, 1937, in Zlín, Czechoslovakia. He grew up in Singapore and India during the Second World War and moved to England in 1946 with his mother and stepfather, his own father having been killed in Singapore. Educated at schools in Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire, he became a journalist working for the *Western Daily Press* (1954-8) and the *Bristol Evening World* (1958-60), and became theatre critic for *Scene* magazine in London (1962-3). He began writing plays for radio and television, including *The Dissolution of Dominic Boot* (1964), *A Walk on the Water*, televised in 1963, and *The Stand-Ins*, later revised as *The Real Inspector Hound* (1968). *Albert's Bridge* (1968) was first broadcast by BBC Radio in 1967.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (1967) premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 1966. The play came to the attention of Kenneth Tynan, then working for the National Theatre, and it was produced at the National in 1967 and on Broadway in 1967, winning a Tony Award for Best Play (USA) in 1968. *The Real Inspector Hound* was first staged in 1968, followed by productions of *Albert's Bridge* and *If You're Glad I'll Be Frank*, both in 1969.

His play *Jumpers* (1972) was staged at the National Theatre in 1972 and his adaptation of Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba* was first performed in the same year. *Travesties* (1975) was first staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company in 1974, transferring to New York in 1975 where it won a Tony Award for Best Play. *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* (1976), was inspired by his friendship with Viktor Fainberg, who had been imprisoned in Czechoslovakia by the Soviets, and Stoppard began to speak out on behalf of dissidents including the Czech playwright Vaclav Havel, who had been charged with subversion. *Professional Foul* (1978) was written for Amnesty International's Prisoner of Conscience Year in 1977.

On the Razzle, adapted from Johann Nestroy's *Einen Jux will er sich machen*, was staged at the National Theatre in 1981, followed by *The Real Thing* in 1982. He was on the board of the National Theatre from 1989-2003. His trilogy of plays set in 19th century Russia, *The Coast of Utopia* (2002), was first staged at the National Theatre in 2002, and was produced at Shotgun Players in 2013 and 2014.

Arcadia (1993) received the Laurence Olivier Award for Best New Play (1993) and has been nominated for two Tony Awards (1995 & 2011).

Tom Stoppard was knighted in 1997. He lives in London. His latest plays include *Heroes* (2005), *Rock 'n' Roll* (2006) and *The Hard Problem* (2015). He has written the screenplays for adaptations of *Anna Karenina* (2012) and *Tulip Fever* (2014), and co-wrote the screenplay for *Shakespeare in Love* (1998).



Calendar Listing

WHAT: The extent to which we are able to address life's obstacles in an open and honest way is directly related to our ability to manifest our highest calling and most noble purpose—to love. Set on a country estate between 1809 and the present-day, Stoppard's masterpiece explores mathematics, landscape gardening, Byron, and the undeniable power of the human heart.

WHEN: Friday, November 30, 2018–Sunday, January 6, 2019

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

TICKET PRICES: Pay-what-you-can previews: November 20–December 6. Regular tickets: \$7–\$52. Advance reservations strongly advised. Shows will sell out!

For more information, go to shotgunplayers.org/online/article/arcadia.

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.