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## Shotgun Players kicks off its 2019 season with ***KILL THE DEBBIE DOWNERS! KILL THEM! KILL THEM! KILL THEM OFF!***, from Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, directed by Mark Jackson & Beth Wilmurt

**"Chekhov doesn't offer a message, but rather examples of embarrassing personal emotions vying for priority next to worldly political concerns."**

—Mark Jackson, *KILL THE DEBBIE DOWNERS! KILL THEM! KILL THEM! KILL THEM OFF!* co-director & Shotgun Players company member

Berkeley, CA – A newly devised theatre piece inspired by Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. Live music, movement, and text creates an original exploration of Chekhov's lasting themes of memories fading, revolutions looming, and visions of the future beckoning. There will be laughter through tears, a gun in act one, and the end of an era. ***KILL THE DEBBIE DOWNERS! KILL THEM! KILL THEM! KILL THEM OFF!*** begins previews on Thursday, March 21; opens on Friday, March 29; and runs through Sunday, April 21, 2019, at the Ashby Stage.

***KILL THE DEBBIE DOWNERS! KILL THEM! KILL THEM! KILL THEM OFF!*** is Mark Jackson and Beth Wilmurt's first collaboration as co-directors. Commenting on the production, Beth Wilmurt says, "We hope to make a theater performance that invites audiences to participate more fully in the evening, to question their expectations, to experience new things they assume they already understand—like what it means to go to a play... For us, this means using everything the theater has to offer—music, dance, design, acting, language, the audience, the given night's performance—to get at questions about personal hopes around social change."

Chekhov's characters feel revolution on the horizon, and are both eager and afraid of change. **Among other things, *KILL THE DEBBIE DOWNERS! KILL THEM! KILL THEM! KILL THEM OFF!* is about the desire for change, and the fear of it.** Co-director Mark Jackson says, "Chekhov doesn't offer a message, but rather examples of embarrassing personal emotions vying for priority next to worldly political concerns. Some of us would like to think of ourselves as activists or politically committed, and then something personal pulls at us more forcefully than something social, and it's embarrassing. Chekhov helps us explore the negotiations we make between the personal and the political."

The cast of ***KILL THE DEBBIE DOWNERS! KILL THEM! KILL THEM! KILL THEM OFF!*** features **Nathaniel Andalis, Gabby Battista, Amanda Farbstein, Sam Jackson, Erin Mei-Ling Stuart, and Billy Raphael**. The creative team features set design by **Mikiko Uesugi**, lighting design by **Ray Oppenheimer**, costume design by **Alice Ruiz**, stage management by **Muriel Shattuck**, props design by **Devon LaBelle**, sound design by **Sara Witsch**, and production assistance by **Jessica McGovern**.

More at [shotgunplayers.org/online/article/debbie-downers](http://shotgunplayers.org/online/article/debbie-downers).

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## Bios

### Mark Jackson

Mark is a director, playwright, performer, and maker. His work has been seen in the Bay Area at Art Street Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, Encore Theatre Company, EXIT Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Potrzebie Dance Project, San Francisco International Arts Festival, The Shotgun Players, and Z Space. Nationally at The Catamounts (Denver), Hunger & Thirst (NYC), and The Studio Theatre (Washington D.C.). Internationally at Arts International Festival IV (Japan), Edinburgh Festival Fringe and Bread & Roses Theatre (UK), Deutsches Theater Berlin and English Theatre Berlin (Germany). [markjackson-theatermaker.com](http://markjackson-theatermaker.com)

### Beth Wilmurt

Beth is a longtime company member having acted in over ten productions from *The Death of Meyerhold* to her most recent, *Iron Shoes*. She has also directed *Nora* and *Edward Gants Amazing Feats of Lonliness*. Beth has created many of her own theatrical and cabaret performances over the years and has acted extensively for several Bay Area theatre companies. Her other longtime passion has been directing choir for San Francisco Community Music Center. She currently directs a children's choir and three older adult choirs. [bethwilmurt.com](http://bethwilmurt.com)

### Anton Chekhov

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was a Russian playwright and short story writer, who is considered to be among the greatest writers of short fiction and a seminal figure in the birth of early modernism in theatre.

Chekhov wrote many of his greatest works from the 1890s through the last few years of his life. In his short stories of that period, including "Ward No. 6" and "The Lady with the Dog," he revealed a profound understanding of human nature and the ways in which ordinary events can carry deeper meaning.

From the late 1890s onward, Chekhov collaborated with Constantin Stanislavski and the Moscow Art Theater on productions of his plays, including classics: *The Seagull* (1895), *Uncle Vanya* (1897), *The Three Sisters* (1901) and *The Cherry Orchard* (1904).

Chekhov practiced as a medical doctor throughout most of his literary career, saying: "Medicine is my lawful wife, and literature is my mistress. When I get fed up with one, I spend the night with the other. Though it is irregular, it is less boring this way, and besides, neither of them loses anything through my infidelity."

## Calendar Listing

**WHAT:** A newly devised theatre piece inspired by Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. Live music, movement, and text creates an original exploration of Chekhov's lasting themes of memories fading, revolutions looming, and visions of the future beckoning. There will be laughter through tears, a gun in act one, and the end of an era.

**WHEN:** Thursday, March 21–Sunday, April 21, 2019

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

**TICKET PRICES:** Pay-what-you-can previews: March 21–28. Regular tickets: \$7–\$40. Advance reservations strongly advised. Shows will sell out!

For more information, go to [shotgunplayers.org/online/article/debbie-downers](http://shotgunplayers.org/online/article/debbie-downers).



## 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).