



THE
Highwood
THEATRE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Kevin Kearney

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Matthew Nicola

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Celebrating Leonard Bernstein's 100th Birthday

THE HIGHWOOD THEATRE PROUDLY PRESENTS *WEST SIDE STORY*

With an all-student cast and a full 25-piece orchestra

As the capstone of its first-ever 'Year-Long Production,' The Highwood Theatre is honored to bring the landmark musical, *WEST SIDE STORY*, to the stage in downtown Silver Spring. The production - the biggest in Highwood history - will feature a cast of 25 exceptionally talented students in grades 7 through 12, backed up by a full orchestra of 25 student musicians from local high schools and colleges. Musical Director Kevin Kearney elaborates on the grand scale of this musical production: "An orchestra of 25 accompanying a musical theatre production, nowadays, is almost unheard of - much less an orchestra of 25 students from ages 10 to 21! With every instrumental part represented from the original score, the sound will captivate the audience and add a new level of emotional intensity to the production."

WEST SIDE STORY, inspired by Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, was written by Arthur Laurents with lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and music by Leonard Bernstein, whose 100th birthday would have been this Summer. The classic love story is set in New York's West Side in the 1950's. Caught between warring ethnic gangs, the Sharks and the Jets, Tony and Maria choose love over old rivalries. But romance, resentment, and growing tensions create a bloody path to the musical's tragic conclusion.

For this production, Highwood has elected to use in-the-round staging, a highly immersive experience for all audience members to enjoy. Directors Matthew Nicola and Dylan Kaufman elaborate: "Staging a musical classic like "West Side Story" in-the-round will undoubtedly give audiences a much more personal and intimate feel. Given how the show's themes remain so painfully etched in our culture, we hope to remind you of how just how beautiful and important the story still is."

Highwood's Year-Long Production program focuses on intensive musical-theatre training. In this season, which began last September, students immersed themselves in all aspects of musical theatre,

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Silver Spring, MD 20910

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participating in master classes with Broadway professionals including New York actor/writer/composer Nick Blaemire and world dance champion Cate Caplin, along with local actors Erin Driscoll and Russell Rinker for additional training. All design for the production – including lights, sound, set, props, and costuming – was created by students in grades 5 through 11.

WEST SIDE STORY will be performed June 1 through 10 at The Highwood Theatre in Silver Spring.

WEST SIDE STORY

Book by Arthur Laurents; Music by Leonard Bernstein; Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim; Based on Conception of Jerome Robbins

Directed by Matthew Nicola and Dylan Kaufman; Music Directed by Kevin Kearney; Choreographed by Tiffany Alastanos; Set and Prop Design by Fiona Lipczenko; Sound Design by Simon Ellerbe; Lighting Design by Jonah Witte; Fight Choreography by Erin MacDonald

A STUDENTS' THEATRE PRODUCTION

Inspired by William Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, this landmark American musical by Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim brings the classic love story to New York's West Side in the 1950s. Caught between warring ethnic gangs, the Sharks and the Jets, Tony and Maria choose love over old rivalries. But romance, resentment and growing tensions create a bloody path to the musical's tragic conclusion. Presented by Highwood's inaugural Year-Long Production Company, this magnificent production will be complemented by a full orchestra.

About The Highwood Theatre

The Highwood Theatre is a nonprofit organization dedicated to bringing the community together through theatre. Now in its 15th Season, Highwood's guiding principle is "anyone can do theatre." Highwood was founded in 2004 and began executing its mission through seasons of professional quality theatre featuring all-student casts, design teams, and production staff. In 2013, in conjunction with its relocation to the heart of downtown Silver Spring, The Highwood Theatre expanded to carry out its mission more fully and develop innovative, engaging programming for artists of all ages through professional and student productions, classes, and programs in schools and for home schooled students.

Contact Information

Tickets: <http://www.thehighwoodtheatre.org/tickets.html>

The Highwood Theatre Office: 301-587-0697

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