



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Cathy Taylor, Cathy Taylor Public Relations  
(773) 564-9564; [cathy@cathytaylorpr.com](mailto:cathy@cathytaylorpr.com)  
Ben Thiem, Director of Member Services, League of Chicago Theatres  
(312) 554-9800; [ben@chicagoplays.com](mailto:ben@chicagoplays.com)

### League of Chicago Theatres Announces Theatre Thursdays Series for 2019-2020 Season

*His Shadow* (16<sup>th</sup> Street Theater),  
*Grey House* (A Red Orchid Theatre),  
*The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley* (Northlight Theatre),  
*Peg* (The New Colony and Broken Nose Theatre),  
*Verböten* (The House Theatre of Chicago),  
*How to Defend Yourself* (Victory Gardens Theater),  
*Her Honor, Jane Byrne* (Lookingglass Theatre Company),  
*The Juniors* (First Floor Theater),  
*Relentless* (TimeLine Theatre Company),  
*Every Waiting Heart* (Artemisia Theatre) and  
*The Fig and the Wasp* (Haven Chicago).

**Chicago, IL** – The League of Chicago Theatres announces the **Theatre Thursdays** line-up for the 2019-2020 Chicago theatre season, featuring one World Premiere per month. The productions include *His Shadow* (16<sup>th</sup> Street Theater), *Grey House* (A Red Orchid Theatre), *The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley* (Northlight Theatre), *Peg* (The New Colony and Broken Nose Theatre), *Verböten* (The House Theatre of Chicago), *How to Defend Yourself* (Victory Gardens Theater), *Her Honor, Jane Byrne* (Lookingglass Theatre Company), *The Juniors* (First Floor Theater), *Relentless* (TimeLine Theatre Company), *Every Waiting Heart* (Artemisia Theatre) and *The Fig and the Wasp* (Haven Chicago). Additional information for each event is available <https://chicagoplays.com/theatre-thursdays/>.

The Theatre Thursdays initiative, first launched in 2005, strengthens and diversifies the Chicago theatre community by encouraging Chicagoans to explore new venues and companies. Each year, the League of Chicago Theatres program focuses on new work with twelve Theatre Thursday events, one per month. Each monthly event provides audiences with a world premiere production and an inside look at the creative process behind new works, including exclusive access to artists.

#### **The 2019-2020 series includes:**

**Thursday, September 19**  
**HIS SHADOW**  
**By Loy A. Webb**  
**16th Street Theater**  
6420 16th Street in Berwyn

A disgruntled college freshman tries to step out of his older brother's towering shadow and make a name for himself on the football field. When tragedy strikes, the course of his career is challenged, and his life is altered. His Shadow is a story of ambition vs. activism: which one will emerge the victor when the two collide? Directed by Wardell Julius Clark, *His Shadow* is an exhilarating world premiere parable by Loy A. Webb. Loy's *The Light* was a hit for Chicago's New Colony before being produced at MCC Theater in New York.

**Thursday, October 31**

**GREY HOUSE**

**By Levi Holloway**

**A Red Orchid Theatre**

1531 N. Wells St. in Chicago's Old Town neighborhood

After a brutal car wreck in the mountains of Oregon, a young couple seeks shelter from a blizzard in a small cabin. But the cabin's seemingly innocent inhabitants: five children and their minder, quickly start to expose the couple's secrets, unmake everything they know about themselves, and hurl them towards a potentially sinister destination. Grey House is a new horror play about the gravity of the past, and the cruel inevitability of its pull.

**Thursday, November 7**

**THE WICKHAMS: CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY**

**By Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon**

**Northlight Theatre**

9501 Skokie Blvd in Skokie

While the Bennets and Darcys are celebrating upstairs, the servants below stairs find themselves in the midst of a holiday scandal. Lydia's ne'er-do-well husband Mr. Wickham has arrived, and it's up to the loyal housekeeper, footman, and new maid to keep the festivities running smoothly without revealing the unwelcome guest. As old misunderstandings and new secrets start to spiral out of control, the residents of Pemberley prove that family, forgiveness, and the true spirit of giving always win the day.

**Thursday, December 5**

**PEG**

**By Liam Fitzgerald**

**The New Colony and Broken Nose Theatre at The Den Theatre**

1331 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood

Peg is excited. Steve is nervous. Sure, they've opened a nice bottle of wine, dinner smells delicious... but the brand new strap-on they ordered has just arrived, and tonight's plan is to flip the script. Peg wants to peg Steve. And even though he was all for it initially, his last-minute hesitation will force this ordinary couple to face their kinks, quirks and societal conditioning, as they're quickly reminded that gender politics follow them everywhere – including the bedroom.

**Thursday, January 30**

**VERBÖTEN**

**Lyrics and music by Jason Narducy and book by Brett Neveu**

**The House Theatre of Chicago at the Chopin Theatre**

1543 W. Division St. in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood

1983. Chicago. It's do-or-die for Verböten—a band made up of outsider teens with seriously complex home lives. As they gear up for a show at The Cubby Bear that is sure to change their lives forever, can they keep their parents from destroying the fabric of their self-made punk rock family? With lyrics and music by Verböten's original guitarist Jason Narducy (Split Single, Superchunk, Bob Mould) and book by Brett Neveu (*Odradek*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Traitor*), *Verböten* is inspired by the true story of Chicago's own young punks.

**Thursday, February 6**

**HOW TO DEFEND YOURSELF**

**By liliana padilla**

**Victory Gardens Theater**

2433 N. Lincoln Ave. in Chicago's Lincoln Park neighborhood

How to Defend Yourself circles around seven college students who gather for a DIY self-defense workshop after a sorority sister is raped. They learn how to "not be a victim", how to use their bodies as weapons, how to fend off attackers. The form of self-defense becomes a channel for their rage, trauma, confusion, anxiety, and desire-lots of desire. Challenged to determine what they want and how to ask for it, the students must ultimately face the insidious ways rape culture steals one's body and sense of belonging. Developed as part of Victory Gardens 2018 Ignition Festival of New Plays and the winner of the 2019 Yale Drama Series Prize, How to Defend Yourself is funny, raw and brutally honest - a triumph from playwright Lily Padilla.

**Thursday, March 26**

**HER HONOR, JANE BYRNE**

**Written and Directed by Ensemble Member J. Nicole Brooks**

**Lookingglass Theatre Company**

821 N. Michigan Ave. on Chicago's Magnificent Mile

Chicago is "The City That Works"—but does it work for everybody? It's 1981, the city's simmering pot of neglected problems boils over, and Chicago's first woman mayor is moving into Cabrini-Green. Is this just a PR stunt, or will it bring the City together? For the next three weeks, residents, activists, media, the "Machine," and the Mayor herself will collide as the City's raw truths are exposed. Who will come out on top? Lookingglass Ensemble Member J. Nicole Brooks creates this smoldering new take on Her Honor Jane Byrne.

**Thursday, April 30**

**THE JUNIORS**

**By Noah Diaz**

**First Floor Theater at The Den Theatre**

1331 N. Milwaukee in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood

A class of high school juniors are tasked with a simple Home Ec assignment: parent a sack of flour for a week or fail. When the flour babies begin dying one by one, the students stop at nothing to ensure that they, and the pretend children they bore, are the last ones standing. A play with war, carnage and genocide, THE JUNIORS is a pitch black comedy about the ambitious and cut-throat world of high school Home Economics and the lengths we'll go to in order to protect what we think is ours.

**Thursday, May 28**

**RELENTLESS**

**By Tyla Abercrombie**

**TimeLine Theatre Company**

615 W. Wellington Ave. in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood

After the death of their mother, two sisters return home to Philadelphia in 1919 to settle her estate. Anelle is a happy socialite desperate to return to the safe illusion of a perfect life with her husband in Boston. Janet is a single, professional nurse, determined to change history and propel black women to a place of prominence and respect. Upon discovering a series of diaries left by their late mother, they find themselves confronted with a woman they never really knew, exposing buried truths from the pasts that are chillingly, explosively *Relentless*.

**Thursday, June 18**

**EVERY WAITING HEART**

**By Lauren Frebee**

**Artemisia Theatre at The Den Theatre**

1331 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood

*Every Waiting Heart* was the winner of Artemisia's 2018 Fall Festival and centers on the relationship between an overworked single mother and her rebellious teenaged daughter. Sherri and Annette have been an unbreakable mother-daughter duo since childhood, but suddenly Annette's rebelling and Sherri's terrified. Desperate for help, Sherri goes to a speed-dating event at a Pentecostal church that unexpectedly changes the course of both of their lives and fractures the bond that has held them together for so long. A deep and intimate dive into what it means to be a strong woman, *Every Waiting Heart* is an unflinching examination of faith and the many variations of love.

**Thursday, July 9**

**THE FIG AND THE WASP**

**By Samantha Behr**

**Haven Chicago at The Den Theatre**

1331 N. Milwaukee Ave in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood

Plague, unrest, natural disasters, a failure in leadership... societies end for many dramatic reasons. Rosaura Flagg, a politician from a political dynasty, works to project stability and the status quo while her 13-year-old daughter Cara lies in a hospital room in a coma-like sleep. She is the first to succumb to "Hopelessness" – a diagnosis given by a nurse, George, who seems to be the only one with answers. The disease spreads rapidly – after all, how do you fight hopelessness? As dramatic as the cause may be, the reality of the end to this society is beautifully mundane. What do you reach for at the end? How do you find hope at the end of the world? *The Fig and The Wasp* explores the destruction of isolation and the power of caring and connection in the face of a world on fire.

The 2019-2020 Theatre Thursdays are sponsored by the Chicago Reader.

**The League of Chicago Theatres' Mission Statement**

Theatre is essential to the life of a great city and to its citizens. The League of Chicago Theatres is an alliance of theatres, which leverages its collective strength to support, promote and advocate for Chicago's theatre industry. Through our work, we ensure that theatre continues to thrive in our city.

**2019 Year of Chicago Theatre**

2019 is the Year of Chicago Theatre, presented by the City of Chicago and the League of Chicago Theatres. To truly fall in love with Chicago, you must go to our theatres. This is where the city bares its fearless soul. Home to a community of creators, risk-takers, and big hearts, Chicago theatre is a hotbed for exciting new work and hundreds of world premieres every year. From Broadway musicals to storefront plays and improv, there's always a seat waiting for you at one of our 200+ theatres. Book your next show today at [ChicagoPlays.com](http://ChicagoPlays.com).

For a comprehensive list of Chicago productions including a Fall Theatre Guide, visit the League of Chicago website, [www.chicagoplays.com](http://www.chicagoplays.com). Discounted tickets are available at [www.hottix.org](http://www.hottix.org) or at the two Hot Tix half-price ticket locations: across from the Chicago Cultural Center at Expo72 (72 E. Randolph) and Block Thirty Seven, Shops at 108 N. State.

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