



KANSAS CITY REPERTORY THEATRE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Ellen McDonald  
816.444.0052 or 816.213.4355  
[publicity@kcrep.org](mailto:publicity@kcrep.org)

**FOR TICKETS:** Box Office at  
816.235.2700 or [www.KCRep.org](http://www.KCRep.org).



## **Kansas City Repertory Theatre Announces Additional Dates for *Origin KC New Works Festival***

*Public Readings and Playwright Slam this Spring; culminates in the  
World Premieres of Fire in Dreamland and Lot's Wife in Rotating  
Repertory - April 22 through May 22, 2016 at Copaken Stage*

**Kansas City, MO (Dec. 16, 2015)** – Marissa Wolf, Kansas City Repertory Theatre's Director of New Works, today announced additional programming and dates for KC Rep's new play program, Origin KC. Featuring the Monday Night Playwright Series, Playwright Slams, the Origin KC New Works Festival and the Mainstage, Origin KC offers audiences a unique experience to

engage with the process of creating theater, and gives emerging and established writers the resources to develop plays for future seasons at KC Rep and beyond.

Spring 2016 will feature a powerful line up of new play readings in the Monday Night Playwright Series with fantastic local playwrights including KC Rep's Artistic Director Eric Rosen, Nathan Louis Jackson and Darren Canady, and a Playwright Slam in which everyone is invited to participate as a playwright or performer. These events are FREE and open to the public.

Kicking off the final slot in KC Rep's 2015-16 season, Origin KC New Works Festival will feature two WORLD PREMIERES, *Fire in Dreamland* and *Lot's Wife* presented in rotating repertory April 22 through May 22 at KC Rep's Copaken Stage. The festival will include two new play readings by acclaimed national playwrights Christina Anderson and Larissa Fasthorse.

Origin KC offers playwrights the financial, creative, and artistic resources required to develop vital, diverse, theatrical work while forwarding Kansas City as a major national center for the development and production of new plays and musicals. Providing each project with processes best suited to the needs of the creators, Origin KC includes commissions, workshops, and staged readings alongside world premiere productions in the mainstage season, and the Origin KC New Works Festival at the end of each season. Throughout the rich development process, audiences are invited to engage with the next generation of great American playwrights. Building on the great success of world premiere productions including *Venice* by Eric Rosen and Matt Sax, and *A Christmas Story, The Musical* by Joseph Robinette, Origin KC's recent work includes *Blueprints to Freedom: An Ode to Bayard Rustin* by Michael Benjamin Washington, *Tallest Tree in the Forest* by Daniel Beaty, *When I Come to Die, Brokeology*, and *Sticky Traps* by KC Rep Playwright in Residence Nathan Louis Jackson, and new musicals such as *Stillwater* by Nathan Tysen and Joe's Pet Project, *Clay* by Matt Sax and Eric Rosen, and *A Little More Alive* by Nick Blaemire.

KC Rep Artistic Director Eric Rosen says, "Placing the playwright at the center of the theater has been a lifelong pursuit, and in my seven years at the Rep, Kansas City has become an influential center for the development of new plays – not just at the Rep, but across our theater community. Origin KC was launched to build on the Rep's success and secure our position as a truly great theater town for writers and audiences. Partnerships with major theaters across the country will deepen and expand the impact of the Rep's artists on the national field, while deepening our commitment to the people of our region."

"I'm thrilled to welcome Kansas City audiences into the creation process of resonant new plays and musicals," says Marissa Wolf. "We're committed to building long term relationships with playwrights, from the seed of an idea through to production, supporting the creation of a contemporary cannon of exciting new American plays."

The Monday Night Playwright Series provides a rare opportunity to step into the world of a new play as it's being built, and meet playwrights whose work electrify stages across the country. Supporting hot local and national playwrights, Monday Night Playwright Series brings to life script-in-hand readings of future hit shows.

The Playwright Slam brings together Kansas City's artistic community for a night of theater revelry in which everyone is invited to participate. The public is invited to bring a 1-3 page script that will be read out loud by actors chosen from the audience.

**Origin KC Monday Night Playwright Series additional programming and dates include:**

**January 18, 2016 at 7pm:** Public New Play Reading @ Spencer Theatre Lounge (4949 Cherry Street, UMKC's James C. Olson Performing Arts Center). *Lot's Wife* written by KC Rep Artistic Eric Rosen (*Clay, Winesburg, Ohio, Venice*). A 1930s noir thriller about a promising playwright with a troubled past.

**February 15, 2016 at 7pm:** Public New Play Reading @ Spencer Theatre Lounge (4949 Cherry Street, UMKC's James C. Olson Performing Arts Center). Untitled Play by KC Rep Playwright-in-Residence Nathan Louis Jackson (*Sticky Traps, Broke-ology, When I Come To Die*). A Jon Stewart-like talk show host takes on gun control and America's political divide.

**March 13, 2016 at 4:30pm:** Playwright Slam @ Copaken Stage (H&R Block in the Power & Light District) after the public production of *Roof of the World*.

**March 14, 2016 at 7pm:** Public New Play Reading @ Spencer Lounge (4949 Cherry Street, UMKC's James C. Olson Performing Arts Center). *Ontario Was Here* by KC Local playwright Darren Canady. A playful, dark look at the lives of two Kansas City social workers, and the powerful bond they share.

**Origin KC New Works Festival**

Kicking off Kansas City Rep's final season slot in the downtown Copaken Stage, Origin KC New Works Festival brings together artists and audiences in a month-long spree of world premiere productions running in rep, alongside staged readings, round table discussions, and celebratory parties.

**Origin KC New Works Festival World Premiere Productions**

*Fire in Dreamland* written by celebrated playwright Rinne Groff (*Saved!, Compulsion*) and directed by KC Rep's Director of New Works Marissa Wolf. In this powerful coming of age story, a young woman named Kate is seduced by the vision of an upstart Dutch filmmaker who has thrown himself into an epic film about a tragic 1911 fire at a Coney Island amusement park. As past and present converge in this haunted, battered landscape, Kate must find a way to rebuild her own life amidst the ruins.

*Lot's Wife*, written by KC Rep's Artistic Director Eric Rosen and directed by Joanie Schultz, tells the story of Adam Mace, a promising playwright with a troubling past, who has written his first new play since the tragic death of his wife and infant child. Set as a 1930s noir thriller, his script raises suspicions that its author is actually confessing to murder. Old wounds between ex-friends and lovers are opened fresh as actors are made to play themselves, a director dreams of a career changing scandal, and even the dead take the stage to tell their side of the story in an epic meta-theatrical murder mystery that is at once heartbreaking and hilarious.

Performances begin Friday, April 22 and run in rotating repertory through Sunday, May 22 at Copaken Stage. Press night for both performances is scheduled for Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7:00 pm. High res rehearsal photos can be found [here](#). *Appropriate for ages 17+*.

**Origin KC New Works Festival Readings, April 14-15, 2016 times TBD:** Public New Play Readings @ Copaken Stage (H&R Block in the Power & Light District)

*What Would Crazy Horse Do?* By Larissa Fasthorse. Based on historic events, playwright Larissa Fasthorse, investigates what happen when two Native American twins are approached by the KKK to form an unsettling partnership. Fasthorse's work has been developed and produced at the Minneapolis Children's Theater, Berkeley Rep, and the Kennedy Center.

*Man in Love* by Christina Anderson. Kansas City native, Christina Anderson's gripping 1930s drama follows a serial killer in a segregated city roiling with violence, love, and hope. Currently under commission with Yale Rep, Lincoln Center, and Berkeley Rep, Anderson has been hailed by American Theater Magazine as one of the fifteen up-and-coming artists "whose work will be transforming America's stages for decades to come."

**Origin KC Mainstage Season:** *Roof of the World*, February 26 – March 27, 2016 @ Copaken Stage. Written by D. Tucker Smith and directed by Eric Rosen, this world premiere production is part spy thriller, part Downton Abbey, and tells an epic love story about a British explorer and an Indian spy during Queen Victoria's rule.

### **Subscriptions and Tickets**

Tickets to the Origin KC New Works Festival range from \$20 to \$59. For 2015-16 season subscription and ticket information, please contact the Box Office at 816.235.2700 or visit [www.KCRep.org](http://www.KCRep.org).

### **Gala 2016**

Save the date for Friday, May 20, 2016 at the newly renovated Spencer Theatre! Last year's Fearless Fête raised more than \$655,000 which helps ensure that KC Rep can continue to create professional productions that garner regional and national acclaim and provide lifelong learning opportunities through our Education and Community Programs which benefit more than 10,000 Kansas City area students each year. For more information, please visit <http://www.kcrep.org/a-fearless-fete-2016> or contact Amanda Middaugh at [Middaugham@kcrep.org](mailto:Middaugham@kcrep.org) or 816.235.1489.

## **About Kansas City Repertory Theatre**

Kansas City Repertory Theatre, one of the nation's oldest and most respected regional theaters, is the center of a great theatre town. KC Rep produces theatrical excellence, creating and sharing stories at the center of our nation's creative crossroads. KC Rep's mission is to advance the art form while cultivating passionate audiences, artists, and advocates to invest in our region's creative future. We build community by connecting people through productions and outreach that educate, entertain, challenge and inspire. Lauded by *The Wall Street Journal*, *TIME* magazine, *Variety* and *The Toronto Sun*, KC Rep produces mainstage plays and special events at Spencer Theatre, where it serves as the professional theatre in residence at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), and Copaken Stage located in downtown Kansas City. KC Rep employs more than 250 professional artists, technicians and administrators, and serves more than 100,000 patrons and 12,000 school children annually. Kansas City Repertory Theatre is led by Artistic Director Eric Rosen and Executive Director Angela Lee Gieras.

## **Social and Digital Media**

Receive daily updates by 'Liking' KCRep's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/KCREP](http://www.facebook.com/KCREP) and follow KC Rep on Twitter at @KCREP or on YouTube by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/user/kansascityrep>. High resolution photos can be downloaded [here](#). B-roll is available upon request.

## **2015-2016 Season At A Glance Kansas City Repertory Theatre**

Kansas City Repertory Theatre ticket office 816.235.2700  
Purchase tickets online at [www.kcrep.org](http://www.kcrep.org).

### ***Sunday in the Park with George***

September 11- October 4, 2015 | Atkins Auditorium at the Nelson-Atkins Museum | Music & Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim | Book by James Lapine | Directed by Eric Rosen

You've seen Georges Seurat's famous painting, but have you heard it? Those who love art, music or both are in for a rare treat as Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's stunning Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece takes the stage inside the Nelson-Atkins Museum. While Seurat works on his famous painting, we see the fascinating drama of his life unfold around him. Savor the Grammy award-winning score that moves the audience through time as we celebrate life, love and the creation of art.

"An audacious, haunting, and in its own intensely personal way, touching work." – *The New York Times*

***Origin KC - WORLD PREMIERE***

***Blueprints to Freedom: An Ode to Bayard Rustin***

October 16- November 15, 2015 | Copaken Stage| Written by Michael Benjamin Washington| Directed by Lucie Tiberghien| Co-production with La Jolla Playhouse

Written by and starring Michael Benjamin Washington, this story is more than relevant. It's riveting. Those who stand up for equality in 2015 are following in the footsteps of Bayard Rustin, the lesser known but powerfully influential civil rights leader who orchestrated the March on Washington and stepped forward himself as an openly gay man at a time when few had the courage to do so. In this ode, an exiled Rustin masterminds "a tribute to the ancestors" 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

***A Christmas Carol***

November 20 - December 24, 2015 | GRAND RE-OPENING of Spencer Theatre | Written by Charles Dickens / Directed by Jerry Genochio

Bah, humbug! Kansas City's favorite holiday tradition is back for its 35<sup>th</sup> season, and the magnificent new Spencer Theatre promises an experience that's more magical than ever. Come share the joy, as our theatre transforms into a page right out of Dickens. Richly textured sets, ornate costumes and spectacular special effects will transport the entire family into the tale of the grumpy Ebenezer Scrooge, who requires the intervention of a few ghostly guides to find the true meaning of Christmas – and life itself.

***The Santaland Diaries***

December 3- December 24, 2015 | Copaken Stage | Written by David Sedaris | Directed by Eric Rosen

Leave the kids at home for this hilariously irreverent holiday show. It's David Sedaris' side-splitting send-up of Christmas and his brief, misguided career as a Macy's elf. Featuring an uproarious soundtrack of holiday tunes, *The Santaland Diaries* skewers everything we love (and secretly loathe) about the holidays. See what it's like for the subversive to work at Santaland, where the only thing more plentiful than good cheer is a good case of the giggles.

"...lots of acerbic asides, plenty of irony and numerous chuckles thanks to the incongruous humor of an embittered elf holding back the curtain for us to see the grimy reality of creating 'holiday magic.'" – *Kansas City Star*

***The Diary of Anne Frank***

January 29 – February 21, 2016 | Spencer Theatre | Written by Frances Goodrich & Albert Hackett | Newly Adapted by Wendy Kesselman | Directed by Marissa Wolf

The most personal aspects of Anne Frank's story went untold until newly discovered writings became part of a mesmerizing Pulitzer-Prize winning play, adapted for our stage by Wendy Kesselman. Peer into the world of a family in hiding and a gifted young writer who came of age during the horrors of the Holocaust. This adaptation weaves together Anne's reflections with

actual survivor accounts to tell the chilling story of Nazi persecution and the prevailing hopes of a girl who – despite everything – inspired generations with her unwavering faith in humanity.

"A powerful new version that moves the audience to gasp, then tears." —Associated Press.

### ***Origin KC- WORLD PREMIERE***

#### ***Roof of the World***

February 26 – March 27, 2016 | Copaken Stage | Written by D. Tucker Smith| Directed by Eric Rosen

Part spy thriller, part Downton Abbey, this world premiere production is an epic love story about a British explorer and an Indian spy during Queen Victoria's rule. This high speed, sweeping drama takes you into uncharted territory (quite literally), where suspense and romance keep your pulse racing and your knees weak. It's fun, sexy, edge-of-your seat excitement that will leave you breathless from the exhilaration of a grand overseas adventure.

#### ***The Fantasticks***

March 18 – April 10, 2016 | Spencer Theatre | Book and Lyrics by Tom Jones| Music by Harvey Schmidt | Directed by Jerry Genochio

It's the longest-running musical in history for a reason. This is theatre magic in its purest form, with clever props, snappy dialogue, plot twists and the mesmerizing performances of a stunningly talented cast. The delightful drama starts as a tale about a boy and a girl whose fathers lovingly hatch a plan to bring them together. But when the sly El Gallo steps in to assist, the young lovers experience the harsh realities of life before wising up to the world and fully realizing their love. A small cast never made such a big impression. Don't miss it.

### **Origin KC- New Works Festival**

Two WORLD PREMIERES presented in rotating repertory

April 22- May 22, 2016 | Copaken Stage | Curated by Marissa Wolf

#### ***Fire in Dreamland***

Written by Rinne Goff | Directed by Marissa Wolf

Moments after you've settled into your seat, this coming-of-age story grabs you with such intensity that you can't look away. A world premiere from celebrated playwright Rinne Goff (*Saved!*, *Compulsion*), it's the story of a modern-day young woman named Kate who is seduced by the vision of a Dutch filmmaker obsessed with the tragic 1911 fire on Coney Island. Past and present converge against a destructive backdrop, and when Kate finally sees the illusion of filmmaking – and of life with an inattentive lover – she rediscovers her ambitions as an independent woman.

#### ***Lot's Wife***

Written by Eric Rosen

You're at times inside the play, at times behind the scenes, all the while wondering whether the story is actually a murder confession. This world premiere production from KC Rep Artistic Director Eric Rosen centers on Adam Mace, a promising playwright with a troubling past who has written his first new play since the tragic deaths of his wife

and infant child. Set as a 1930s noir thriller, the script opens old wounds between ex-friends and lovers as actors are made to play themselves, and even the dead take the stage to tell their side of the story in an epic meta-theatrical murder mystery that is both heartbreaking and hilarious.

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**Please direct all media inquiries to: Ellen McDonald at 816.444.0052,  
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<b>SUNDAY ON THE PACE WITH GEORGE</b> SEP 11 - OCT 4, 2015	<b>BLUEPRINTS TO FREEDOM</b> AN ODE TO BAYARD RUSTIN OCT 10 - NOV 15, 2015	<b>Christmas Carol</b> NOV 20 - DEC 24, 2015	<b>SANTALAND DIARIES</b> DEC 3 - 24, 2015
<b>THE MAY OF Anne Frank</b> JAN 29 - FEB 21, 2016	<b>ROOF OF THE WORLD</b> FEB 26 - MAR 27, 2016	<b>FANTASTICKS</b> MAR 18 - APR 10, 2016	<b>NEW WORKS FESTIVAL</b> APR 22 - MAY 22, 2016

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