



# A Season of Achievements

by Makayla Hoppe

**T**he Old Globe's 2024 season is bringing variety — from mystery to comedy to adaptations and premieres. Notably, this season marks a special achievement for the theater that has been producing Shakespeare for 90 years.

Erna Finci Viterbi Artistic Director Barry Edelstein gave us a look into the season and discussed some of the shows that will be produced.

## Henry VI

For the first time, the Globe will be attempting Shakespeare's "Henry VI." Barry has taken the three plays, Parts I, II, and III, and adapted them into two parts. The two productions will be played in repertory from June 30 to Sep. 15. According to Barry, this production of "Henry VI" will make the Globe the 11th theater in the country to have produced all 36 of Shakespeare's plays.

"It's a wonderful story that's full of all the things that Shakespeare is famous for," Barry said, "battle scenes,

great poetry, vivid characters, a lot of comedy and a lot of excitement and real thrills — and these plays just are not very well known. It's a real voyage of discovery for our audience."

The production coincides with a year-long community engagement that will explore *The War of the Roses*.

"We wondered if there would be a way to include participation from the communities of San Diego," Barry said. "The Globe's arts engagement programming has relationships with over 40 nonprofit community-based organizations. So, there are going to be ways — both onstage and backstage — for San Diegans to participate in the conception of the show, in the making of the show, and then eventually in the performance of the show, and we're incredibly excited about it."

This community engagement comes with The Globe's new mission to expand theater "Beyond the Stage."

"Our arts engagement work... serves about 30,000 people for

free with programming out around the community," Barry said. "It's professional plays that go on tour, but also classes, workshops, skilled job training programs and things that take place in neighborhoods all over San Diego that impact seniors, veterans, incarcerated populations, at-risk youth, and unhoused populations. So, the globe really has this gigantic platform that is state-of-the-art in the American theater doing community-based work. And that's theater that lives beyond the stage."

## Murder On the Orient Express

Playwright Ken Ludwig ("Lend Me a Tenor") has adapted Agatha Christie's "Murder On the Orient Express," and this production, running Sep. 7-Oct. 6, will mark the West Coast premiere. According to Barry, Ken Ludwig has inserted his wit into the story for this new adaptation.

"One thing that's really worth noting is the stage design of this production is by a genius designer based in New York,



"Murder on the Orient Express."

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with the wonderful name of Paul Tate dePoo III — just an extraordinary name for an extraordinary artist," Barry said. "He manages to put a train on stage, a full-scale train in different parts as you move along from car to car. It is a spectacle that is really breathtaking. So, for people who know the story, it is a fresh take on it, and for people who don't, it's a wonderful introduction to one of the great murder mysteries that we have in English literature."

#### **Dracula, a Comedy of Terrors**

Gordon Greenberg and Steve Rosen have returned to The Old Globe following "Ebenezer Scrooge's BIG San Diego Christmas Show!" and "Crime and Punishment, A Comedy," to deliver a comedic take on Bram Stoker's "Dracula." The show is currently running off-Broadway in New York and will play Sep. 20-Oct. 13 at The Old Globe.

"They have this technique where they have a small company of five actors play multiple roles," Barry said. "There's

a lot of incredible high jinks, and it's fun watching these five actors play 30 parts and quickly change and use puppets and wigs. And it's just an outlandish, comic, vaudevillian, Borscht Belt sensibility that tells the story with tongue-in-cheek. It's just uproariously funny and we're going to run it during Halloween, which I think will be a lot of fun — so a very special show and we're going to have a great time with it."

When asked if he believed there would be a breakout production this season, Barry was unable to answer.

"Are you asking me to pick my favorite child?" Barry asked with a laugh. "I can't really do that. All the shows offer slightly different things."

"Fat Ham" (May 25-June 23) is really super smart and very, very funny, and an outlandish take on Shakespeare's 'Hamlet.' I think it is very interested in LGBTQ themes."

"We have a musical called 'Ride' (Mar. 30-Apr. 28) [from] London making its American premiere. That's about

the first woman to ride her bicycle around the world in the 19th century. It's just a wonderful adventure and an inspiring story about a woman who does something daring and takes her faith in her hands in a way that, at the time, women weren't being given permission to do so. That's a really inspiring and beautiful story."

"Age of Innocence" (Feb. 8-Mar. 10) opens our season at The Old Globe. It's a lush, beautiful adaptation of one of the great American novels about class and the American obsession with social position and how difficult that can be, but at the same time, it is a really stunning romance."

"So, I think each one of these plays [this season] is going to deliver really exciting experiences to our audiences and I hope that it will be an opportunity for people who've never come to The Globe before to try something out and find something that works for them." ☆