

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 7, 2020

Press Contact

Ann Reynolds (425) 392-1942 x129

areynolds@villagetheatre.org

Contact Information for Publication

Issaquah (425) 392-2202 / Everett (425) 257-8600

www.villagetheatre.org

Developmental Production *XY* Begins Beta Testing at Village Theatre

The developmental production also marks a new collaboration between Village Theatre and Seattle Rep.

February 14 – 23, 2020

ISSAQUAH, Wash. – February 7, 2020 – Village Theatre kicks off the next series of **Beta Productions** with *XY*, a new musical written by **Oliver Houser** and developed and directed by **Hunter Bird** that runs at Village Theatre's **First Stage Theatre** in Issaquah from **February 14 – 23, 2020**. The production marks the beginning of an exciting **collaboration between Village Theatre and Seattle Rep**, who will continue development of the show in a future season.

A truly unique partnership between two regional theatre powerhouses, the collaboration between Village Theatre and Seattle Rep came after both organizations witnessed an early reading at **The National Alliance for Musical Theatre Festival of New Musicals** in October of 2018. With the support of commercial producers **Marleen and Kenny Alhadeff** (*Come From Away* and *Memphis*), *XY* continues its developmental journey through both Village Theatre and Seattle Rep, which will eventually lead to a world premiere production. "After both theatres expressed interest in the show," said **Village Theatre Associate Artistic Director Brandon Ivie**, "it made sense to work together and capitalize on the strengths that each organization has. Developing musicals is a difficult and long process. It's wonderful to partner with Seattle Rep as we bring this show to life."

After a successful reading at **The 2019 Village Theatre Festival of New Musicals**, the upcoming developmental Beta Production of *XY* will allow the creative team to test the show in front of savvy theatregoers using simple sets and costumes. After each performance, audiences are invited to ask questions and share feedback, which can result in changes between each performance. "So much of this show has been conceived statically," said **writer Oliver Houser**. "There's only so much we can do at readings and behind music stands. This developmental production will allow us to discover how the show moves with our actors onstage, and also how it moves with an audience. It's a thrilling opportunity." Once the Beta Production closes, Seattle Rep will continue to develop the show in a future season.

The cast for the Beta Production includes New York-based actor and comedian **Peter Smith** (*Shrill* on Hulu, *Diana* at Ars Nova), and Seattle favorites **Beth DeVries** (*Les Misérables*), **Sara Porkalob** (Gregory Award-winning creator of *The Dragon Cycle*), **Justin Huertas** (Gregory Award-winning creator of *Lizard Boy*), and youth actors **Tristan Hagen** (*Matilda*) and **Mikayla Sanchez** (*Matilda* and *The Passage*). Joining writer **Oliver Houser** and director and developer **Hunter Bird** on the creative team are co-music directors **Michael Nutting** and **Julia Thornton**, and gender consultant **Josephine Kearns**.

Village Theatre is also pleased to announce that funding for all 2020 Beta Productions, including *XY*, has been approved for an **Art Works grant** via the **National Endowment for the Arts**. The Art Works funding category supports projects that focus on public engagement with, and access to, various forms of excellent art across the nation; the creation of art that meets the highest standard of excellence; learning in the arts at all stages of life; and the integration of the arts into the fabric of community life. “The arts are at the heart of our communities, connecting people through shared experiences and artistic expression,” said **Arts Endowment chairman Mary Anne Carter**. “The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support projects like the Beta Production *XY*.”

An uplifting musical about identity and coming to terms with your past, *XY* will run at First Stage Theatre in Issaquah February 14-23, 2020. Tickets are \$30 (\$25 for youth and senior), and additional discounts are available for Village Originals Members. For more information visit www.VillageOriginals.org.

Additional Show Information:

XY

An uplifting musical about identity and coming to terms with your past.

February 14 – 23, 2020

By Oliver Houser

Developed and Directed by Hunter Bird

Music Direction by Michael Nutting and Julia Thornton

Gender Consultation by Josie Kearns

Chris can't shake Christine. Everywhere Chris goes, there's Christine staring back when he looks in a mirror. But when Chris falls in love for the first time, the divide between then and now starts to blur. *XY* is a stirring musical drama about letting go of the past and coming home to the most unfamiliar of places: ourselves.

Hashtag: #VTBeta **Facebook:** [VillageTheatre](https://www.facebook.com/VillageTheatre) **Instagram:** [@VillageTheatre](https://www.instagram.com/VillageTheatre) **Twitter:** [@thevillagevault](https://twitter.com/thevillagevault)

Facebook Event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/186336272603180/>

Cast & Production Team Interviews, Bios, and Headshots Are Available Upon Request.

For Calendar Editors:

February 14 – 23, 2020

Performances are Wednesday – Sunday

Wednesday & Thursday at 7:30PM

Fridays & Saturdays at 8:00PM

Sundays at 2:00PM and 7:00PM

Location

Village Theatre at First Stage Theatre

120 Front Street North

Issaquah, WA 98027

Tickets

\$25-\$30

Web: <https://www.villagetheatre.org/issaquah/beta-series-xy.php>

Phone: (425) 392-2202 | Tuesday – Saturday 11:00AM – 7:00PM

About Village Theatre

Based in Issaquah, with operations in Everett, Village Theatre is the largest fully producing theatre in the Pacific Northwest, and a leading producer of musical theatre in the United States. Cultivating entertaining and quality productions since 1979, Village Theatre has grown into one of the country's best attended theatres, with approximately 20,000 Subscribers and 220,000 attendees each Season. The theatre's new works program, Village Originals, is nationally recognized for its commitment to the advancement of new musicals, having supported the development of over 150 new works to date. Village Theatre also takes pride in nurturing tomorrow's audiences through its youth education and outreach programs, serving over 57,000 young people and their families annually.

About Village Originals

The Village Originals program of readings, workshops, and developmental productions represents one of the strongest commitments to new musicals in the nation, developing such musicals as Pulitzer Prize-winner *Next to Normal*, Tony Award-winner *Million Dollar Quartet*, Drama Desk Award-winner *Cupid & Psyche*, Stephen Schwartz's *Snapshots*, and the Drama Desk Award-nominated *It Shoulda Been You*, *After the Fair*, and *Making Tracks*. Village Theatre is one of the few resident theatres to provide regular opportunities at every step of musical development, from first table reading to full-scale premiere production. Each season, new works are included as part of Village Theatre's five-show Mainstage lineup alongside the classics. Anchored by The Annual Festival of New Musicals and the Beta Series, the Village Originals program is dedicated to the continued growth and evolution of musical theatre, and a determination that the form will remain vibrant and relevant for generations to come.

About Seattle Rep

Seattle Rep puts theater at the heart of public life. Founded in 1963 and winner of the 1990 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, Seattle Rep is currently led by Artistic Director Braden Abraham and Managing Director Jeffrey Herrmann. Over a season and throughout the year, Seattle Rep collaborates with extraordinary artists to create productions and programs that reflect and elevate the diverse cultures, perspectives, and life experiences of the Pacific Northwest. Seattle Rep's nationally recognized programs include the New Play Program, Public Works Seattle, the August Wilson Monologue Competition, Pay What You Choose ticketing options, and numerous audience enrichment and engagement opportunities including post-play panels, discussions, and community events.

###