



the wilbury group

393 Broad Street, Providence RI 02907 | 401.400.7100 | [www.thewilburygroup.org](http://www.thewilburygroup.org)

## THE WILBURY THEATRE GROUP ANNOUNCES SEASON 5

### *This Beautiful City, Rosencrantz & Guildenstern, & more set for 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary season*

**PROVIDENCE, RI:** Josh Short, Founding Artistic Director of Providence's Wilbury Theatre Group, has announced the group's 2014-15 season. Bookended by two very different but equally exciting musicals and featuring a bold blende of new works and reimagined classics from the most cutting-edge playwrights, Season 5 promises to be The Wilbury Group's most ambitious season yet.

"With each season The Wilbury Group strives to select and present audiences with the most challenging, relevant plays available," says **Artistic Director Josh Short**. "With our 2014-15 season we've taken care to select the most relevant cutting-edge theatre, new and classic, by some truly great and diverse playwrights. Inspired in part by our own ongoing search for our own identity as an emerging theatre company in a small city, Season 5 will take our audiences from the centers of US evangelism and corporate greed, to the backstage of Shakespearean play, and into a rock and roll suburbia that could only be considered 'next to normal.'"

The Wilbury Group's 2014-2015 season starts in September with the New England premiere of the critically acclaimed documentary-musical from the award-winning New York theatre troupe The Civilians, **THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY**. Based on interviews conducted by investigative theatre troupe The Civilians in Colorado Springs, a modern-mecca for Evangelicals' in the United States, during the 2008 crisis that was the New Life minister Ted Haggard scandal, *This Beautiful City* is a fascinating and timely look at faith, and how it affects the American landscape.

Following the docu-musical comes a new play by one of America's most prolific and fascinating young playwrights Lucas Hnath that takes a more liberal approach with one of the most historic figures of all time, Walt Disney himself. **A PUBLIC READING OF AN UNPRODUCED SCREENPLAY ABOUT THE DEATH OF WALT DISNEY** is a bold, hilarious, and sometimes disturbing look at the man behind the legend that was Walt Disney.

In January The Wilbury Group revisits a classic with a new telling of Tom Stoppard's award-winning masterpiece **ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD** follows in which Shakespearean Laurel and Hardy finally get a chance to take the lead role, but do so in a world where echoes of *Waiting for Godot* resound, where reality and illusion intermix, and where fate leads our two heroes to a tragic but inevitable end.

From the classic comedy of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*, the Wilbury Group moves to a new comedy that takes a sharp look at how women, and men, find happiness and conquer disappointment, Brown University graduate Gina Gionfriddo's off-Broadway hit **RAPTURE, BLISTER, BURN**.

To close the season The Wilbury Group goes out with a bang by presenting the winner of three Tony Awards and the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Tom Kitt and Brian Yorkey's rock-musical **NEXT TO NORMAL**. As the most talked about new play in years, *Next to Normal* was called the groundbreaking rock musical "that pushed Broadway in new directions" by Rolling Stone magazine.

Subscriptions for the 2013-2014 season start at just \$95 and are available for purchase online at [www.TheWilburyGroup.org/buy-tickets](http://www.TheWilburyGroup.org/buy-tickets), or by calling the box office at (401) 400-7100. Discounts are also available for seniors, students, artists, and military personnel.



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## 2014-2015 SEASON PLAY SYNOPSES

***THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY*** by The Civilians, written by Steven Cosson and Jim Lewis from interviews by the company, music and lyrics by Michael Friedman  
September-October, 2014 | NEW ENGLAND PREMIERE

*This Beautiful City* investigates the growth of the evangelical movement in Colorado Springs by award-winning investigative theatre pioneers The Civilians. As they were conducting interviews with people involved with or affected by the mega-church movement and the battle raging over gay marriage, the scandal broke about New Life Church pastor Ted Haggard, which shook the entire city of Colorado Springs, providing the play's creators with an unprecedented opportunity to capture an important event as it was taking place, and providing the people of Colorado Springs with the opportunity to express their opinions and concerns as those events unfolded. *This Beautiful City* is a fascinating and timely look at faith and how it affects the American landscape. **"Engaging, inquisitive and evenhanded work of theater about the transformation of an American city and many American lives."** —NY Times. **"A fascinating crazy quilt on faith's role in American life."** —Variety. **"An entertaining and thoughtful portrait of a large segment of society."** —NY Post. **"Praise the Lord and pass the tape recorder! A lively docudrama with a generosity of spirit."** —Associated Press.

***A PUBLIC READING OF AN UNPRODUCED SCREENPLAY ABOUT THE DEATH OF WALT DISNEY*** by Lucas Hnath  
November-December, 2014 | NEW ENGLAND PREMIERE

By way of New York's famed off-Broadway house Soho Rep and from one of America's hottest young playwrights today comes a bold and unflinching portrait of the man behind the legend, Walt Disney. Tonight Walt is going to read you a screenplay he wrote. It's about his last days on earth. It's about a city he's going to build that's going to change the world. And it's about his brother. It's about everyone who loves him so much, and it's about how sad they're going to be when he's gone. Right? I mean, how can they live without him? How can anyone live without him? **"A blood-pumping and often hilarious evening of theater...Beyond being very funny, the poetic brevity and jarring choppiness of [Hnath's] dialogue captures the spirit of a generation of civic-minded Americans, like Disney..."**—TheaterMania. **"A devastating portrait of a man for whom make-believe was more real than reality itself"** —New York Post. **"In its darkly comic dissection of an all-American icon, this Public Reading is no Mickey Mouse production."** —Entertainment Weekly.

***ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD*** by Tom Stoppard  
January-February, 2014

Acclaimed as a modern dramatic masterpiece, *Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead* is the fabulously inventive tale of Hamlet as told from the worm's-eye view of the bewildered Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two minor characters in Shakespeare's play. In Tom Stoppard's best-known work, this Shakespearean Laurel and Hardy finally get a chance to take the lead role, but do so in a world where echoes of *Waiting for Godot* resound, where reality and illusion intermix, and where fate leads our two heroes to a tragic but inevitable end. **Winner of the 1965 Tony Award for Best Play, and the 1965 NY Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Play.** **"Very funny, very brilliant, very chilling; it has the dust of thought about it and the particles glitter excitingly in the theatrical air."** - The New York Times. **"A stimulating, funny, imaginative comedy."** - The New York Daily News.



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**RAPTURE, BLISTER, BURN** by Gina Gionfriddo  
March-April, 2014 | RHODE ISLAND PREMIERE

Hailed as a "genius" by Variety, playwright Gina Gionfriddo's latest comedy tackles feminism's foibles in what The New York Times called an, "**intensely smart and immensely funny**" new play. Three generations of women share their raucous and refreshing approaches to navigating work, love and family. Rock star academic Catherine envies her friend Gwen who finds her domestic responsibilities less than satisfying. Meanwhile the witty and wry student Avery wonders whether she has more in common with Catherine's aging mother than any of today's modern feminists. This new comedy takes a sharp look at how women, and men, find happiness and conquer disappointment. "**Intensely smart and immensely funny, with sharp-witted dialogue.**" –The New York Times. "**Roaringly funny, piercingly sharp, and bittersweet.**" The Associated Press. "**Sharp-eyed and big hearted! A shrew, incisive, thoroughly winning comedy!**" –The Boston Globe.

**NEXT TO NORMAL** Music by Tom Kitt, Book and Lyrics by Brian Yorkey  
May-June, 2014 | RHODE ISLAND PREMIERE

Suburban housewife Diana struggles to battle her mental demons, brought about, in part, by her bipolar disorder. Husband Dan fights to help keep both her mind and his family stable, even as Diana decides to stop taking her meds. Sixteen year-old Natalie, on the other hand, can't seem to escape the shadow of her mysterious eighteen year-old brother. Winner of three Tony Awards and the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Next to Normal* is the most talked about new play in years and the acclaimed, groundbreaking rock musical "**that pushed Broadway in new directions**" (Rolling Stone). "**The best musical of the season — by a mile. It'll pin you to your seat.**" – Rolling Stone. "**It is much more than a feel-good musical. It is a feel-everything musical.**" - The New York Times.

*\*plays and dates are subject to change.*

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