

Theatre Eddys

Friday, December 15, 2017

"The Eddys: Theatre Eddys' Top Bay Area Plays & Musicals of 2017"

Theatre Eddys Presents
"The Eddys 2017"

Our San Francisco Bay Area Top Theatre Productions, 2017

Contact Information

Reviewer **Eddie Reynolds** can be reached at TheatreEddys@yahoo.com

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Ratings Legend:

5 E's - Loved It - A classic, would see it a second time.
4 E's - Really Liked It - Excellent, strong production.
3 E's - Liked It - Good production but something is lacking or not clicking.
2 E's - Just OK - Below average but had at least one interesting component.
1 E - Did Not Like It - Waste of time.
No rating - A work in progress (reading or workshop), or children's production.

About Us



[GuyDads](#)

Two gay, Jewish dads (Eddie and Ed) share their adventures, travels, thoughts and opinions. Their [GuyDads](#) blog features their

life on the town with a generous dose of social action and gay activism. The blog [Theatre Eddys](#) showcases theatre reviews.

[About Us](#)

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Member of the American Theatre Critics Association



This year, I attended with friends and family and reviewed 140 shows locally along with 11 shows in Ashland, Oregon (ten at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival) and 35 at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, for a total of 189 plays and musicals seen in 2017.

Of the 140 local productions that were plays and musicals (rather than operas), the most “5 E” ratings went to Berkeley Repertory Company with 6 “E’s,” followed closely by San Francisco Playhouse (5), Marin Theatre (5), and SHN (5, all touring shows and not included in “The 2016 Eddys” which represent only Bay-Area-produced shows).

Choosing “Top Lists of the Year” is made complicated by so many outstanding productions in a region blessed with so many phenomenal companies of all sizes (over 300 stages in the SF Bay Area). Even more distressing are all the outstanding productions I did not get to see and are thus not represented in the following lists.

And now for “The Eddys.” *Theatre Eddys* selects as the best of the best among the 140 local seen in 2017:

Theatre Eddys Top 10 Plays in 2017,



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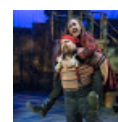
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Popular Reviews of the last 30 days



["Man of La Mancha"](#)
 Man of La Mancha Dale Wasserman (Book); Mitch Leigh (Music); Joe Darion (Lyrics) Custom Made Theatre Edward H...



["Peter and the Starcatcher"](#)
 Peter and the Starcatcher Rick Elice, based on the novel by Dave Barry & Ridley Pearson Hillbarn Theatre D...

San Francisco Bay Area Productions

1. *The Events* – David Greig, [Shotgun Players](#).

The genius of playwright David Greig particularly shines through in his instruction to a company like Shotgun Players to use a different community choir each night of the play's performance. For Shotgun, that meant lining up almost 25 choirs and a total of 350 singers. For the Shotgun audience, it meant we got to understand the power of music to tell a difficult story and to heal wounds as well the power of watching others – not unlike ourselves -- react and comment through their music and in real time to "The Events" unfolding in front of us all.

2. *Hand to God* - Robert Askins. [Berkeley Repertory Theatre](#).

At a time we all need to be shaken up to see the devils among us (as if we were not already enough shaken by each day's latest Tweets and Facebook headlines), Berkeley Repertory Theatre's production of "Hand to God" came along – a revel in hilarity, irreverence, vulgarity, and humanity and all from the mouth and wide, red-veined eyes of a puppet named Tyrone.

3. *peerless* - Jiehae Park, [Marin Theatre](#).

peerless is a brilliantly conceived production that proceeds at such whirlwind speeds through events that cause audience members to lean back in their seats in full laughter before soon moving to the edge of their seats in tight-mouthed, tense anticipation of what will happen next.

4. *Daniel's Husband* – Michael McKeever, [New Conservatory Theatre Center](#)

After seeing the gripping, heart-wrenching (and yet at times, ridiculously funny) West Coast premiere of Michael McKeever's "Daniel's Husband", the urgency to reassess one's own life, relationships, and abandoned 'to-do' list is palpable and blood-pressure-rising.

5. *Native Son* - Nambi E. Kelley (Adapted from the Novel by Richard Wright), [Marin Theatre](#)

For more than three-quarters of a century, "Native Son" has jarred the thinking and awareness of both black and white America. As a stage adaptation, the story of Bigger is shockingly still too familiar in a present-day America that has yet to figure out how to call a halt to the seemingly inevitable destruction of too many of her young, African-American men.

6. *brownsville song (b-side for tray)* - Kimber Lee, [Shotgun Players](#).

Playwright Kimber Lee forces us not to move on too quickly without first hearing the entire story behind a headline that has a tendency to blend in with all the similar ones before and after it. Like the other, 'b' side of the old 45 rpm records, she flips over the oft-played side of the murderous headline and asks us to watch and listen to who one of these young victims of urban shootings really is and to meet the family who must live forever with his loss and their grief.

7. *Small Mouth Sounds* - Bess Wohl, [American Conservatory Theatre](#).

Six seekers of needed solace arrive for a week of forested retreat, reflection, and possible resurrection from various personal traumas and tragedies – a



["The Birthday Party"](#)

The Birthday Party Harold Pinter American Conservatory Theatre Dan Hiatt & Judith Ivey If after twenty-five year...



["Our Great Tchaikovsky"](#)

Our Great Tchaikovsky Hershey Felder (Book); Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (Music) TheatreWorks Silicon Valley Hershey Felder...



["The Eddys: Theatre Eddys' Top Bay Area Plays & Musicals of 2017"](#)

Theatre Eddys Presents "The Eddys 2017" Our San Francisco Bay Area Top Theatre Productions, 2017 This ye...



["Sondheim on Sondheim"](#)

Sondheim on Sondheim Stephen Sondheim (Music & Lyrics); James Lapine (Conceiver) 3 Below Theatres & Lounge...



["The Laramie Project"](#)

The Laramie Project Moisés Kaufman (and Members of Tectonic Theatre Project) Palo Alto Players ...



["Daughter of a Garbage Man"](#)

Daughter of a Garbage Man Maureen Langan The Marsh Maureen Langan Maureen Langan -- accomplished

stand-up ...



["A Christmas Story: The Musical"](#)

A Christmas Story: The Musical Benj Pasek & Justin Paul (Music & Lyrics); Joseph Robinette (Book) San Francisco Playhou...



["Black Rider: The Casting of the Magic Bullets"](#)

Black Rider: The Casting of the Magic Bullets William S. Burroughs (Book); Tom Waits (Music & Lyrics)

Shotgun Players ...

SF Bay Area Theatre Companies

- [3Girls Theatre Company](#), SF
- [42nd Street Moon](#), SF
- [6th Street Playhouse](#), Santa Rosa
- [Actors Ensemble of Berkeley](#)
- [Actors' Theatre](#), Santa Cruz
- [Actor's Theatre of San Francisco](#)
- [African-American Shakespeare Company](#), SF
- [Alter Theater](#), San Rafael
- [American Conservatory Theatre \(ACT\)](#), SF
- [Anton's Well Theater Company](#), Berkeley
- [At Last Theatre](#), SF
- [Aurora Theatre Company](#), Berkeley

week where they are to refrain from any talking except when directed by their Teacher.

8. *Barbeque* - Robert O'Hara, [San Francisco Playhouse](#).

Step right in the middle of a biting hilarious, incisively irreverent, and deliciously raunchy look at one family, its convoluted relationships, and the individual and collective excesses, prejudices, and self-destructive behaviors of its members.

9. *The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabler* - Jeff Whitty, [Dragon Productions](#).

A hilarious, Vaudevillian-like glimpse of the afterlife of fictional characters, this is a first-class, must-see outing that will delight every lover of stage and film as the fictional stars of today and yesteryear parade before us in a wild, wiley, and sometimes totally whacky Hedda like none before her.

10. *Luna Gale* - Rebecca Gilman, [Aurora Theatre](#).

Rebecca Gilman's timely and important play. "Luna Gale" teaches more than entertains, leaving us with a new-found empathy for the complicated, overloaded role of a social worker in today's foster childcare universe. Even more, Luna Gale reminds us that at the heart of every one of those ninety cases is a precious child just wanting to be loved in a safe, caring home.

Five Theatre Eddys Honorable Mention Plays in 2017

(In No Particular Order)

--> *Shakespeare in Love*, Based on the Screenplay by Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman, Adapted for the Stage by Lee Hall, [Marin Theatre](#).

--> *Leaving the Blues*, Jewelle Gomez, [New Conservatory Theatre Center](#).

--> *A View from a Bridge*, Arthur Miller, [The Pear](#).

--> *Eclipsed*, Danai Gurira, [Curran Theatre](#).

--> *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Adapted by Ursula Rani Sarma, based on the Novel by Khaled Hosseini, [American Conservatory Theatre](#).

Theatre Eddys Top 10 Musicals in 2017,
San Francisco Bay Area Productions

1. *The Four Immigrants*, Min Kahng (Book, Music & Lyrics), [TheatreWorks, Silicon Valley](#).

The story of immigrants arriving on the shores of the Golden State is told with songs that often sound as all-American as "Yankee Doodle" – songs with notes of jazz, ragtime, country-western, and even Sousa-like march

- [Beach Blanket Babylon](#), SF
- [Berkeley Playhouse](#)
- [Berkeley Repertory Theatre](#)
- [Best of Broadway \(SHN\)](#), SF
- [Boxcar Theatre](#), SF
- [Brava Theater Center](#), SF
- [Breadbox Theatre](#), SF
- [Broadway by the Bay](#), San Mateo
- [Broadway San Jose](#)
- [Broadway West Theatre Co](#), Fremont
- [Butterfield 8 Theatre Company](#), Concord
- [CAFE/Off-Market Theater](#), SF
- [California Shakespeare Theater](#), Berkeley
- [California Theatre Center](#), Sunnyvale
- [Center REpertory Company](#), Walnut Creek
- [Central Works](#), Berkeley
- [Cinnabar Theater](#), Petaluma
- [City Lights Theatre Company](#), San Jose
- [Coastal Repertory Theatre](#), Half Moon Bay
- [Contra Costa Musical Theatre](#), Walnut Creek
- [Crowded Fire Theatre Company](#), SF
- [Curran Theater](#), SF
- [Curtain Theatre](#), Mill Valley
- [Custom Made Theatre Company](#), SF
- [Cutting Ball Theater](#), SF
- [Diablo Theatre Company](#), Walnut Creek
- [Douglas Morrisson Theatre](#), Hayward
- [Dragon Productions Theatre Company](#), Redwood City
- [El Teatro Campesino](#), San Juan Bautista
- [Encore Theatre Company](#), SF
- [Exit Theater](#), SF
- [Expression Productions](#), SF
- [Faultline Theater](#), SF
- [Festival Opera](#), Walnut Creek
- [FOGG Theatre Company](#), SF
- [foolsFURY Theater Company](#), SF
- [Foothill Music Theatre](#), (Foothill College) Los Altos
- [Golden Thread Productions](#), SF
- [Hillbarn Theatre](#), Foster City
- [Impact Theatre](#), Berkeley
- [Indra's Net Theater](#), Berkeley
- [Jewel Theatre Company](#), Santa Cruz
- [Lamplighters Music Theatre](#), SF
- [Landmark Musical Theatre](#), SF
- [Lorraine Hansberry Theatre](#), SF
- [Los Altos Stage Company](#) (formerly Bus Barn Stage)
- [Los Gatos Shakespeare Festival](#)
- [Lyric Theatre of San Jose](#)
- [Made Up Theatre](#), Fremont
- [Magic Theatre](#), SF
- [Marin Onstage](#), Novato
- [Marin Shakespeare Company](#), San Rafael
- [Marin Theatre Company](#), Mill Valley
- [Marsh, The](#), SF
- [Mountain Play](#), Mill Valley
- [Mystic Bison Theatre and Dance](#), SF
- [Naatak Indian Theatre](#), Santa Clara

beats. The musical explores and exposes a part of San Francisco, California, and U.S. history still largely unknown today. Within a few scenes, the resemblances to current events in America of this century-old history become increasingly surreal.

2. ***Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of the Temptations***, Dominique Morisseau (Book); The Legendary Motown Catalogue (Music & Lyrics), [Berkeley Repertory Theatre](#).

This world premiere, musical history of the Temptations in one whose story and music should propel it into the same outer orbits that has kept "The Jersey Boys" so globally popular since its 2005 debut.

3. ***Rags***, Joseph Stein (Book); Charles Strouse (Music); Stephen Schwartz (Lyrics), [TheatreWorks](#), [Silicon Valley](#).

There are not adjectives enough to describe the heart and genius Robert Kelley brought to his direction of this big, complex musical that flows on the stage in a stream of scenes that never pause, never confuse, never falter. That this is a story over one hundred years old of Jewish immigrants arriving at Ellis Island may be true, but that it still rings with contemporary relevance – now more than ever – becomes strikingly clear by a director's subtle touch.

4. ***A Night with Janis Joplin*** - Randy Johnson (Creator & Writer), [American Conservatory Theatre](#).

In an evening not to be soon forgotten even as pulse rates decrease to normal and the ear worms left by throbbing music eventually fade from audience ears, American Conservatory Theatre presented in rock concert fashion Randy Johnson's (creator, writer, and director) *A Night with Janis Joplin*.

5. ***Fun Home*** - Jeanine Tesori (Music); Lisa Kron (Book & Lyrics), based on the Graphic Novel by Alison Bechdel, [Curran Theatre](#).

At times blunt and bleak, the musical that fills out the entire story of a small-town, Pennsylvania family -- while heartbreakingly sad at points -- also finds plenty of room for many chuckles and some big laughs, heartwarming memories, first-love romps, and difficult but powerful self-discoveries.

6. ***Smokey Joe's Café***, Jerry Leiber & Mike Stoller (Music & Words), [Broadway by the Bay](#).

A foot-stomping, non-story review of a whopping collection of thirty-nine hits created by Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller during the 1950s and 1960s. This show grabs hold of its audience in the opening notes, shakes them up in number-after-number's eye-popping choreography, and then leaves them in the end with big grins and ear-worms that probably will not go away for days.

7. ***The Hunchback of Notre Dame***, Alan Menken (Music); Stephen Schwartz (Lyrics); Peter Parnell (Book), [Hillbarn Theatre](#).

Based on the 1831 novel by Victor Hugo, "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" as a stage musical retains the songs of the 1996 Disney film while keeping more of the darker, more serious elements of the novel than does the movie. This is not a musical that guarantees a happy ending; but under the direction of Riley Costello, the current Hillbarn Theatre production absolutely proved to be

- [New Conservatory Theatre Center \(NCTC\)](#), SF
- [Northside Theatre Company](#), San Jose
- [Oasis San Francisco](#)
- [Off Broadway West Theatre Company](#), Oakland
- [Opera San Jose](#)
- [Pacific Coast Repertory Theatre](#), Pleasanton
- [Pacific Repertory Theatre](#), Carmel-by-the-Sea
- [Pacifica Spindrift Players](#), Pacifica
- [Palo Alto Children's Theatre](#)
- [Palo Alto Players](#)
- [Pear Theatre](#), Mountain View
- [Peninsula Youth Theatre](#), Mountain View
- [Performers Under Stress](#), SF
- [Phoenix Theatre](#), SF
- [PianoFight](#), SF
- [Playwrights' Center of San Francisco](#)
- [Pocket Opera](#), SF
- [Ragged Wing Ensemble](#), SF
- [Ray of Light Theatre](#), SF
- [San Francisco Mime Troupe](#)
- [San Francisco Opera](#)
- [San Francisco Playhouse](#)
- [San Jose Children's Musical Theater](#)
- [San Jose Stage Company](#)
- [San Jose State University Theatre Arts](#)
- [San Jose Theaters](#)
- [Santa Clara Players](#)
- [Santa Clara University Presents](#)
- [Santa Cruz Follies](#)
- [Santa Cruz Shakespeare](#)
- [Second Wind Productions](#), SF
- [Shadowlight Productions](#), SF
- [Shelton Theater](#), SF
- [Shotgun Players](#), Berkeley
- [Silicon Valley Shakespeare](#), San Jose
- [South Bay Musical Theatre](#), Saratoga
- [Spare Stage](#), SF
- [Stage 1 Theatre](#), Newark
- [Stagebridge](#), Oakland
- [Stanford Repertory Theatre](#)
- [Stanford University Theatre and Performance Studies](#)
- [Studio Theatre of California](#), San Jose
- [Summer Repertory Theatre](#), Santa Rosa
- [Sunnyvale Community Players](#)
- [Tabard Theatre Company](#), San Jose
- [Teatro Visión](#), San Jose
- [Teatro Zinzanni](#), SF (on hiatus)
- [TheatreFIRST](#), Oakland
- [Theatre in the Mountains](#), Los Gatos
- [Theatre of Yugen](#), SF
- [theatre Q](#), bay area
- [Theatre Rhinoceros](#), SF
- [TheatreWorks Silicon Valley](#), Palo Alto/Mountain View
- [Thick Description](#), SF
- [Thrillpeddlers Theatre](#), SF
- [Tides Theatre](#), SF

inspiring, moving, and uplifting as well as musically stunning in every respect.

8. *Anything Goes*, Cole Porter (Music & Lyrics); P.G. Wodehouse, Guy Bolton, Howard Lindsay & Russell Crouse (Original Book); Timothy Crouse & John Weidman (New Book), [Pacific Coast Repertory Theatre](#).

Not only are the songs of Cole Porter big, perennial draws, but so are his uniquely clever lyrics, the rousing choreography (including one of the best tap numbers in all Broadway history), comical elements that make the best of Vaudeville look dull, and a multi-level love story that is full of mishaps, disguises, and many happy endings for all.

9. *Silence! the Musical* - Jon Kaplan & Al Kaplan (Music & Lyrics); Hunter Bell (Book), [Ray of Light Theatre](#).

"Silence! The Musical" is certainly not for everyone but is definitely for any one willing to go with the flow of four-letter words not usually spoken in polite company as well as subjects mostly found in slasher movies.

10. *Cabaret*, Joe Masteroff (Book); John Kander (Music); Fred Ebb (Lyrics), [Hillbarn Theatre](#).

Hillbarn's version of this classis was boiling hot from Minute One with sexually explicit grabbing, rubbing, pinching, slapping, and thrusting of every possible body part by a cast dressed scantily in cheap bras, panties, and garters or in leather straps, pants, and boots.

Five Theatre Eddys Honorable Mention Musicals in 2017

(In No Particular Order)

--> *Evita*, Andrew Lloyd Webber (Music); Tim Rice (Lyrics), [Pacific Coast Repertory Theatre](#).

--> *Patience*, William S. Gilbert (Libretto) & Arthur Sullivan (Music), [Lamplighters](#).

--> *Side Show*, Bill Russell (Book & Lyrics); Henry Krieger (Music); Bill Condon (Additional Book Material), [Foothill Musical Theatre](#).

--> *Assassins*, Stephen Sondheim (Music & Lyrics); John Weidman (Book), [Bay Area Musicals](#).

--> *Monty Python's Spamalot*, Eric Idle (Book & Lyrics); John Du Prez & Eric Idle (Music), [Palo Alto Players](#).

Theatre Eddys Top 3 Solo Shows in 2017, San Francisco Bay Area Productions

1. *The Mushroom Cure*, Adam Strauss, [The Marsh](#).

There is no way anyone can walk out of *The Mushroom Cure* without a greater understanding of OCD and an never-to-be-forgotten empathy for its sufferers. But everyone is also ensured to leave feeling uplifted by the true

- [We Players](#), SF
- [West Bay Opera](#), Palo Alto
- [West Valley Light Opera](#), Saratoga
- [Western Stage](#), Salinas
- [Z Space Studio \(Word for Word, Z Plays\)](#), SF

Ticketing Sites

- [Goldstar Events](#) - Half-priced tickets or better, SF, San Jose, LA, San Diego, Las Vegas, Chicago, Boston & Washington DC.
- [LiveSV](#) - discount tickets, San Jose & South Bay. Usually half-price. Member of the Artsopolis Network of over 30 cities in US.
- [Theatre Bay Area](#) - discount tickets for SF Bay Area available online and/or TIX Union Square, SF
- [Vivid Seats](#) - a full-service marketplace that facilitates transactions between fans looking to buy or resell tickets to their favorite sports, concerts, and theater events.
- [BroadwayBox.com](#) - discount tickets for select Broadway and Off-Broadway, also Las Vegas and London.
- [Playbill.com](#) - discount tickets for select Broadway and Off-Broadway by joining Playbill Club
- [Theatremania.com](#) - discount tickets for select Broadway and Off-Broadway by joining discount list.
- [NYTix.com](#) - discount tickets for select Broadway shows and other attractions. Requires monthly membership fee.
- [Stub Hub SF Bay Area theatre tickets](#). A ticket marketplace to buy and sell tickets.
- [Broadway.com](#) - Show tickets to New York and London. No discounts.
- [TICKETPlace](#) - discount tickets, Washington DC
- [Theatre Development Fund](#) - NYC. Become a member and receive discount info.
- [TodayTIX](#) - an app for buying last-minute theater tickets.

List of Shows Attended

- [2016](#) - ## shows
- [2015](#) - 146 shows
- [2014](#) - 112 shows
- [2013](#) - 90 shows
- [2012](#) - 93 shows
- [2011](#) - 133 shows
- [2010](#) - 76 shows
- [2009](#) - 84 shows
- [2008](#) - 98 shows
- [2007](#) - 104 shows
- [2006](#) - 81 shows
- [2005](#) - 82 shows
- [2004](#) - 76 shows
- [2003](#) - 43 shows
- [Alpha List of Operas seen](#)

Theatre Resources & Blogs

 [A Beast in a Jungle](#)

story of how this man, this comedian, and now even this new friend of ours has found in the end maybe not the cure, but certainly a way to manage, to survive, and yes, to thrive.

2. *Hershey Felder: Beethoven*, Hershey Felder (Book); Ludwig van Beethoven (Music), [TheatreWorks](#), [Silicon Valley](#).

The narrator and performer extraordinaire relates the life story of one of the world's most celebrated composers, Ludwig van Beethoven. The musical pieces, much of which we all know so well, are as full of stories behind their making as their treble and bass staves are packed with celebrated notes, sharps, and flats.

3. *Daughter of a Garbageman*, Maureen Langan, [The Marsh](#).

In her one-woman tour-de-force, Maureen Langan explores in some sincerity but mostly with full tongue-in-cheek why America seems currently to be rewarding reality show stars and not her (or you or me). She looks at her upbringing to find out why did she grow up not realizing that "all you have to be in life is young, hot, and famous" to be successful.

Posted by [GuyDads](#) at 3:33 PM



Labels: [The Eddys](#), [Theatre Eddys Best of 2017](#)

1 comment:



[binhtran](#) December 18, 2017 at 2:25 AM

Great!
[sơn đồ gỗ](#)

[sơn đồ gỗ tại nhà](#)

[son cho cua go thi son loai nao](#)

[sơn gỗ loại nào tốt](#)

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Labels

- [5 E \(174\)](#) [4 E \(129\)](#) [3 E \(73\)](#)
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