

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 12

**MARIN THEATRE COMPANY
PRODUCES THE WORLD PREMIERE
OF LAUREN GUNDERSON AND MARGOT MELCON'S
SECOND JANE AUSTEN HOLIDAY ROMANCE**

The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley

MILL VALLEY, CA—[Marin Theatre Company](#) (MTC) renews Regency romance and holiday charm with the World Premiere of Margot Melcon's and MTC's Playwright in Residence Lauren Gunderson's [The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley](#).

As companion piece to the duo's previous [Miss Bennet](#)—both continuations of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*—*The Wickhams* is an ebullient homage, replete with the tell-tale markers of any Austen narrative: love, family, and some fiercely determined women.

As the events of *Miss Bennet* unfold upstairs at Pemberley Estate, the servants below stairs find themselves in the midst of a different holiday scandal. An unwelcome visitor has stumbled into the hall in the middle of the night—Mr. Darcy's nemesis, and Lydia's incorrigible husband—George Wickham. The bustling housekeeper, Mrs. Reynolds, alongside Cassie, the resilient new housemaid, and Brian, the helplessly romantic footman, must each balance their holiday preparations with keeping Wickham confined—for a secreted letter may be the key to bringing him to justice. But before long, old grudges and new misunderstandings reach a boiling point, and when the festivities spiral into chaos, Pemberley's residents struggle to keep peace without taking sides. Warm and sensational, Gunderson and Melcon's second Austen adaptation delves into class, privilege, family and forgiveness, making for another instant holiday classic.

The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley is the second World Premiere from Lauren Gunderson to feature on MTC's stage as part of her Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's National Playwriting Residency with the company. Co-commissioned with Jungle Theater in Minneapolis and Northlight Theatre in North Chicago, *The Wickhams* has received an Edgerton Foundation New Play Award and generous support from The Shubert Foundation, William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, and The Tournesol Workshop Initiative - The Barth Foundation.

Massachusetts-based director, **Megan Sandberg-Zakian**, helms a phenomenal team of local actors: **Neiry Rojo** as Cassie; **Jennie Brick** as Mrs. Reynolds; **Melissa Ortiz** as Elizabeth Darcy; **Madeline Rouveral** as Lydia Wickham; **August Browning** as Brian; **David Everett Moore** as Fitzwilliam Darcy; and **Kenny Toll** as George Wickham.

More About the Dynamic Duo of Playwriting, Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon

Lauren M. Gunderson is the most produced playwright in America of 2017, the winner of the Lanford Wilson Award, the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award and the Otis Guernsey New Voices Award. She is also a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and John Gassner Award for Playwriting, and a recipient of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's National Playwriting Residency with Marin Theatre Company. She studied Southern Literature and Drama at Emory University, and Dramatic Writing at NYU's Tisch School where she was a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. Her work has been commissioned, produced and developed at companies across the US including South Coast Rep (*Emilie*, *Silent Sky*), The Kennedy Center (*The Amazing Adventures of Dr. Wonderful And Her Dog!*), Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The O'Neill, The Denver Center, San Francisco Playhouse, Marin Theatre Company, Synchronicity, Berkeley Rep, Shotgun Players, TheatreWorks, Crowded Fire and more. She co-authored *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* with Margot Melcon, which was one of the most produced plays in America in 2017. Her work is published at Playscripts (*I and You*, *Exit Pursued By A Bear*, *The Taming*, and *Toil And Trouble*), Dramatists (*The Revolutionists*, *The Book of Will*, *Silent Sky*, *Bauer*, *Miss Bennet*) and Samuel French (*Emilie*). Her picture book *Dr Wonderful: Blast Off to the Moon* was released from Two Lions / Amazon in May 2017. LaurenGunderson.com and [@LalaTellsAStory](https://www.instagram.com/LalaTellsAStory)

Margot Melcon is a theatre artist, administrator and writer. She was the Director of New Play Development at Marin Theatre Company for seven years, where she dramaturged over 30 productions - including six world premieres - and administered the company's two annual new play prizes and commissioning program. She has developed plays with TheatreWorks, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Crowded Fire Theater, Shotgun Players, Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, the Kennedy Center, the New Harmony Project, and the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis. She is currently the Program Executive for Promoting Culture at the Zellerbach Family Foundation. Margot is a graduate of California State University, Chico.

More About *The Wickhams* Director, Megan Sandberg-Zakian

Megan Sandberg-Zakian is a freelance theater director based in Jamaica Plain, MA. Recent directing credits include the world premiere of *Nat Turner in Jerusalem* (New York Theatre Workshop), *Skeleton Crew* (The Huntington Theatre Company), *The Broken Record* (New York Times Critics Pick, FringeNYC Overall Excellence Award), *The Convert* (Underground Railway Theater, Elliot Norton Award: Outstanding Production), *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (Trinity Rep/Perishable Theatre), *Dontrell*, *Who Kissed the Sea* (Cleveland Public Theatre, NNPN Rolling World Premiere). Megan has previously served as the Associate Artistic Director of The 52nd Street Project (NYC), The Providence Black Rep (RI), and Underground Railway Theater (Cambridge, MA). She is currently the Director-in-Residence at Merrimack Repertory Theatre in Lowell, MA, where credits include the world premiere of Eleanor Burgess' *Chill*, *The Royale*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *It's a Wonderful Life*. She is a recipient of the Princess Grace Theater Award and the TCG Future Leaders fellowship, a member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab, a proud SDC member, and co-founder of Maia Directors, a consulting group for artists and

organizations engaging with Middle Eastern stories. megansz.com, maidirectors.com

CALENDAR LISTING

Theatre | Performing Arts

WHAT

[*The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley*](#)

WHO

By Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon

Directed by Megan Sandberg-Zakian

FEATURING

*Jennie Brick: MRS. REYNOLDS

August Browning: BRIAN

*David Everett Moore: FITZWILLIAM DARCY

*Melissa Ortiz: MRS. ELIZABETH DARCY

Neiry Rojo: CASSIE

Madeline Rouverol: LYDIA WICKHAM

*Kenny Toll: GEORGE WICKHAM

* Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association

WHEN

November 15 - December 9

PERFORMANCES

OPENING NIGHT: Tuesday, November 20, at 7:30pm

Evenings

Tuesday - Sunday, 7:30pm

Matinees

Sunday (Preview), November 18, at 4:00pm

Thursday (Perspectives), November 29, at 1:00pm

Saturday, November 24 and December 1 & 20, at 2:00pm

Sunday, November 25 and December 2 & 9, at 2:00pm

WHERE

Marin Theatre Company | 397 Miller Ave | Mill Valley, CA 94941

ABOUT

This holiday season, MTC revisits Regency-era romance with the World Premiere of Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon's ***The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley***—a companion piece to the duo's delightful *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*—both continuations of Jane Austen's popular novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. As the events of *Miss Bennet* unfold upstairs at Pemberley, the servants below stairs find themselves in the midst of a different holiday scandal. An unwelcome visitor has arrived, disrupting holiday preparations and sowing discord among Pemberley's residents. As the festivities spiral into chaos, a secreted letter may be the key to resolving old disputes and new misunderstandings. Warm and sensational, Gunderson and Melcon's second Austen adaptation delves into class, privilege, family and forgiveness, for an instant holiday classic.

Tickets \$25 - \$70

Discounts for seniors, teens, military families, and teachers are available.

Group Discounts: Purchase 8 or more tickets and receive a \$7 discount off each ticket. MTC will also waive any applicable order fees. As the organizer of a group, your ticket is free! Contact the Box Office for more details.

Press Photos will be available for ***The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley*** on Friday, November 16, 2018.

MTC ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

- ***Window on the Work:*** Join members of MTC's artistic staff and cast of the show to discuss artistic and production elements of MTC's production of ***The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley*** at 7:00pm on Thursday, November 8, at the Mill Valley Public Library.
- ***Young Professionals Night:*** Starting this season, MTC will host a Young Professionals Night, complete with a pre-show reception, on the first Wednesday of each production. For ***The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley***, the YPN event will take place on Wednesday, November 21st with a reception starting at 7:00 PM, followed by the 7:30pm performance. Interns, apprentices, students, and other young professionals in any field are encouraged to attend.
- ***Perspectives:*** The third Thursday of each show is the Perspectives matinee performance which includes a pre-show topical lecture. For ***The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley***, the Perspectives matinee is scheduled for Thursday, November 29, with the pre-show lecture beginning at 12:30pm, and the performance beginning at 1:00pm.
- ***Pre-Show Discussions:*** Join members of MTC's artistic staff to discuss the play, playwright and play's themes on Wednesdays before the 7:30pm performances.
- ***After Words:*** Join a member of MTC's artistic staff (often with one or more members of the cast) for a Q&A talkback after every performance, except Saturday evenings and Opening and Closing Nights.

ACCESS

Marin Theatre Company provides open captioned performances of each of the plays in our mainstage series on the Thursday matinee. The open captioned performance for ***The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley*** will be Thursday, November 29, at 1:00pm.

For visually impaired patrons, Large Print playbills are available with one week's advance notice. To request a Large Print playbill, call MTC's Box Office, (415) 388-5208, or use the California Telecommunications Relay Service by dialing "711." For hearing impaired patrons, amplified sound Assistive Listening Devices are available. Our system will also work with personal assistive hearing devices equipped with a T-coil.

CONTACT

marintheatre.org | (415) 388-5208 | boxoffice@marintheatre.org

ABOUT MTC

Marin Theatre Company is the Bay Area's premier mid-sized theatre and the leading professional theatre in the North Bay. We produce a six-show season focused on new American plays. We are committed to the development and production of new plays, with a comprehensive New Play Program that includes productions of world premieres, two nationally recognized annual playwriting awards and readings and workshops by the nation's best emerging and established playwrights. Our numerous education programs serve more than 5,000 students from over 40 Bay Area schools each year. MTC strives to create intimate, powerful and emotional experiences that engage audiences to discuss new ideas and adopt a broader point of view. We believe in taking risks and inspiring people to participate in live theatre, regardless of personal means. MTC celebrates the intellectual curiosity of our community, and we believe that theatre is an important tool to help build empathy. MTC was founded in 1966 and is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

PRESS CONTACT

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