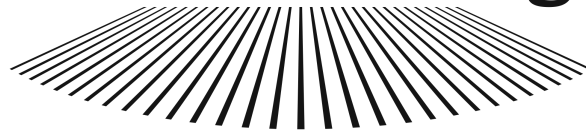


# TheWesternStage



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT**

**Kathy Cusson**

**Email:** kcusson@hartnell.edu

**831 755-6982**

Written by Kathy Cusson

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## **2024 Season Announcement**

Managing Artistic Director - Melissa Chin-Parker  
50th Year Anniversary

### **THE STORY:**

SALINAS, CA - With only a few months left in the 2023 season, The Western Stage is thrilled to announce what lies ahead for the 50th Anniversary 2024 season. Next year's offerings have been curated by Managing Artistic Director, Melissa Chin-Parker. Having been with the company for over 30 years and recently accepted the official position of Artistic Director after 3 years as interim, Chin-Parker has put together a season that pays homage to the company's past Artistic Directors while revealing her design for The Western Stage's future.

*"I am very excited to share our 50th anniversary/2024 Season lineup with you. Although this is the third season of my choosing, it is the first to be chosen under my official title as TWS's Managing Artistic Director, and it is full of amazing works that honor our past while leaning intentionally into the future. It is a celebration of TWS' 50 years in the Salinas Valley and our desire to rebuild the program while embracing the significant changes that have happened to live theatre since 2020. Why these titles? What's going on with The Western Stage? What's planned for the 50 th Anniversary? I'm glad you asked!! But there is too much to share with you here, so I am inviting you to meet with me and some of my staff to answer those questions and more. It will be a chance for us to get to know each other a bit better and for me to celebrate my official hire as TWS' forth Artistic Director, something that I am very honored and proud to be. The date will be chosen soon, and we will most likely have a first gathering for our Pass Holders and then another for anyone else who would like to close out the 2023 season with us. Keep watching for your invitation!" - Melissa Chin-Parker, Managing Artistic Director*

***Babe, the Sheep Pig***

by David Wood

Based on the book by Dick King Smith

Mainstage Theater

Perfs: March 2024

The tale of high adventure in the farmyard that became the hit movie Babe is a captivating play for children young and old. A leading writer of children's plays brings the heartwarming story of the piglet who rises to fame at the Grand Challenge Sheep Dog Trials.

***Merrily We Roll Along***

Music & Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Book by George Furth

Based on the original play by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart

Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick

Originally Directed on Broadway by Harold Prince

Originally produced on Broadway by Lord Grade. Martin Starger, Robert Fryer and Harold Prince in association with Ruth Mitchell and Howard Haines

Mainstage Theater

Perfs: May - June 2024

Sondheim's semi-autobiographical musical turns back the clock on friendship and the high price of success. Merrily We Roll Along begins in the present and moves backwards, tracing the lives of wealthy, jaded composer, Franklin Shepard, and his two estranged friends through each milestone of their personal and professional lives (good and bad). A modest-sized show that crackles with the wit, humor and intensity that embody the spirit of New York City. With a brilliant "Broadway-style" score and that deep insight one expects from any Sondheim endeavor, Merrily We Roll Along is a spirited and moving cautionary tale for anyone who has ever pursued a dream.

"Merrily We Roll Along" is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International(MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. [www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com). Licensing is through Music Theatre International

***The Mountaintop***

by Katori Hall

Studio Theater

Perfs: June 2024

A gripping reimagining of events the night before the assassination of the civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. On April 3, 1968, after delivering one of his most memorable speeches, an exhausted Dr. King retires to his room at the Lorraine Motel while a storm rages outside. When a mysterious stranger arrives with some surprising news, King is forced to confront his destiny and his legacy to his people.

***Hunchback of Notre Dame***

Music by Alan Menken

by David Wood

Based on the book by Dick King Smith

### Mainstage Theater

Perfs: March 2024

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Lyrics by Stephen Swartz

Book by Peter Parnell

Based on the Victor Hugo novel and songs from the Disney film

### Mainstage Theater

Perfs: July - August 2024

A lushly scored retelling of Victor Hugo's epic story of love, acceptance and what it means to be a hero. Based on the Victor Hugo novel and songs from the Disney animated feature, The Hunchback of Notre Dame showcases the film's Academy Award-nominated score, as well as new songs by Menken and Schwartz. Peter Parnell's new book embraces story theatre and features verbatim passages from Hugo's gothic novel.

"The Hunchback of Notre Dame" is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. [www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com). Licensing is through Music Theatre International

### ***Enemy of the Pueblo***

by Josefina López

### Studio Theater

Perfs: August - September 2024

In "An Enemy of the Pueblo" a curandera (shaman woman) warns the people in the border town of Milagros of the poisoning of the water, but no one wants to believe her because their economic futures depend on the water in the springs attracting the "gringos" back to the town. "Josefina López, famous for her breakout play 'Real Women Have Curves,' has taken inspiration from Ibsen's 'An Enemy of the People,' changing one word that shifts the story of the play from frosty Norway to the warmth of a Mexican village called Milagros (miracles) with 'An Enemy of the People.' [Josefina López] gives the tale of public corruption a feminist spin by making the hero a woman named Magdalena Del Rio.

### ***The Last Five Years***

Written and Composed by Jason Robert Brown

Originally Produced for the New York stage by Arielle Tepper and Marty Bell

Originally Produced by Northlight Theatre Chicago, IL

### Studio Theater

10 Perfs: Oct 5, 6, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 26, 27

*This modern musical ingeniously chronicles the five-year life of a marriage, from meeting to break-up and from break-up to meeting. An emotionally powerful and intimate musical about two New Yorkers in their*

by David Wood

Based on the book by Dick King Smith

### Mainstage Theater

Perfs: March 2024

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*twenties who fall in and out of love over the course of five years, the show's unconventional structure consists of Cathy, the woman, telling her story backwards while Jamie, the man, tells his story chronologically; the two characters only meet once, at their wedding in the middle of the show. Featuring a two-person cast, The Last Five Years is a great opportunity for actors with both range and stamina.*

### **Emilia**

by Morgan Lloyd Malcom

### Mainstage Theater

Perfs: October - November 2024

Emilia Lanier née Bassano (1569 - 1645) was one of the first English female poets to be published. This all-but-erased historical figure is the subject of Morgan Lloyd Malcolm's Olivier award-winning play, which was first commissioned for Shakespeare's Globe with an all-female cast before heading to London's West End. The little we know of Emilia Bassano Lanier is that she is the rumored "Dark Lady" in Shakespeare's sonnets, mistress of Lord Chamberlain, a mother, teacher who founded a school for women, and radical feminist with North African ancestry. Living at a time when women had such limited opportunities, Emilia Lanier is therefore a fascinating subject for this speculative history, representing the stories of women everywhere whose narratives have been written out of history.

**Melissa Chin-Parker**, Managing Artistic Director  
**Kathy Cusson**, Operations Manager  
**Malinda DeRouen**, Webmaster  
**John Englehorn**, Master Electrician  
**Richard Green**, Company Photographer  
**Rebecca Houston-Browdy**, Wardrobe Supervisor  
**Zalissa Ré Johnson**, Production Stage Manager  
**Harvey Landa**, Patron Services Manager  
**David Parker**, Scene Shop Supervisor/Scenic Designer & Artist  
**Maegan Roux**, Costume & Hair & Makeup Manager  
**Sam Sullivan**, Casting Coordinator  
**Susanne Burns**, Casting Assistant  
**Cheryl Worthy**, Company Manager

### WHEN

**2024 Season - March - November 2024**

by David Wood

Based on the book by Dick King Smith

### Mainstage Theater

Perfs: March 2024

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### **WHERE**

**The Studio Theater/ The Mainstage Theater** in the Hartnell College Performing Arts Center (Building K), 411 Central Avenue, Salinas, CA.

### **TICKETING INFORMATION**

Adult Mainstage \$30 Studio \$28; Seniors/Military/Teachers \$24; Students \$16 (Hartnell Students FREE); Youths (5-15) \$12; Group tickets available by contacting the TWS Box Office.

Online tickets and more information: [westernstage.com](http://westernstage.com) or call **(831) 755-6816**.

TWS Box Office is open Wednesday-Saturday 5:00-8:00pm. and one hour before curtain time on matinee Sundays. Leave VM to get callback within 24 hours.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

These events are wheelchair accessible. Individuals requiring other accommodations should contact the ticket office at least one week prior to the event.

### **CURRENT COVID-19 INFORMATION**

The Western Stage is not requiring COVID vaccine or proof of a negative test result at this time. Ticket holders are asked to not attend the event if they have COVID-19 like symptoms and have **not** tested for COVID-19, have been recently exposed to COVID-19 or have recently tested positive for COVID-19. This policy is subject to change based increase infection rates and or Hartnell College policy updates.

Mask policy in The Studio Theatre - In order to keep our unmasked actors healthy and to prevent performance cancellations, we are requiring all patrons to wear masks while in the Studio Theatre due to the close proximity of the audience to the stage.

### **ABOUT THE WESTERN STAGE – ESTABLISHED 1974**

The Western Stage (TWS) is a professionally managed, community-based theatre company and educational program that provides opportunities for the creative process and high-level artistic experiences. Led by its educational mission and believing that strong arts experiences are important for building innovative, creative, and resilient communities, The Western Stage endeavors to offer a robust variety of programs designed for personal growth and skill development that address the need for a safe space where students and theatre enthusiasts may engage in theatre production while working side-by-side with theatre professionals. Through its annual production season, The Western Stage endeavors to provide strong

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pathways and development for artists throughout the continuum of a career in theatre and its related performing arts. The Western Stage develops new works that speak to the history and culture of the Salinas Valley and provides educational opportunities for students of all skill levels to explore and develop their unique talent. [www.westernstage.com](http://www.westernstage.com)

**ABOUT HARTNELL COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT – ESTABLISHED 1920**

The Hartnell CCD serves more than 17,000 students annually through its main campus in Salinas, the Alisal Campus in East Salinas, and education centers in King City, Soledad, and Castroville. Hartnell College is a Hispanic Serving Institution that provides associate degrees and certificate programs. It prepares students to transfer to four-year colleges and universities and to enter the workforce with necessary skills. Hartnell College is known for its innovative public and private partnerships that support world class education for STEM, career technical education, fine and performing arts, humanities and social sciences, nursing and health sciences, and athletics. We are proud to be winners of the 2015 Innovation Award for CSin3 –a Computer Science collaboration with CSU Monterey Bay that leads to a bachelor’s degree in three years. **We are growing leaders through opportunity, engagement and achievement.** For more about Hartnell CCD, visit [www.hartnell.edu](http://www.hartnell.edu).

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