

For Immediate Release

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**BRIGHTON CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE OF AN EPIC RETELLING OF HOMER’S *THE ODYSSEY***

Brighton Center for the Performing Arts presents *The Odyssey* by Homer, translated by Emily Wilson, and adapted and directed by Gregory Keng Strasser. *The Odyssey* will play July 12-15, 2018, at the Brighton Center for Performing Arts, 7878 Brighton Rd., 48116. Performances are Thursday-Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. Ticket prices are $15 for adults, $13 for students, and $13 for seniors. Tickets are available online at [www.brightonperformingarts.com/tickets](http://www.a2ct.org/), by calling the office at 810-299-4130, at the Brighton Community Ed office at 850 Spencer Rd., or at the door. Additional information is available by visiting [www.brightonperformingarts.com](http://www.brightonperformingarts.com).

Homer’s *The Odyssey* is the most well-known epic in the western canon, and was most recently adapted for the stage by MacArthur “genius” grant winner Mary Zimmerman for the Goodman Theatre in Chicago in 1999 from the Robert Fitzgerald translation.

The first great adventure story in the Western canon, *The Odyssey* is a poem about violence and the aftermath of war; about wealth, poverty, and power; about marriage and family; about travelers, hospitality, and the yearning for home. In this fresh, authoritative version—the first English translation of *The Odyssey* by a woman, Emily Wilson, professor at University of Pennsylvania—this stirring tale of shipwrecks, monsters, and magic comes alive in an entirely new way. Written in iambic pentameter verse and a vivid, contemporary idiom, this engrossing translation matches the number of lines in the Greek original, thus striding at Homer’s sprightly pace and singing with a voice that echoes Homer’s music. This will be the world premiere of her translation. The production will feature spectacular shadow puppets, epic movement sequences, as well as dynamic and engaging original music. Join us at the Brighton Center for Performing Arts to help bring him home!

The artistic staff of *The Odyssey* includes set designer Jason Sell, puppets designed by Sarah Norton, lighting designer Abbey Kojima, costume designer Camille Charara, props designed by Ken Balazovich, and music composed by Johnny Posada and Lucas Hardy. The cast features principals Harrison Kenum as Odysseus and Alexandra Reynolds as Athena. The ensemble is comprised of Skylar Deming, Noa Gelb, Lucas Hardy, Danielle Peck, Johnny Posada, Rashna Sarwar, Jonah Schulte, Kylie Ann Stone, and Mason Van Gieson. Kenum is an actor based in Tennessee and Los Angeles and graduated from Vanderbilt University. Gelb, Posada, and Van Gieson are recent alums of the University of Michigan. Peck is a graduate of Michigan State University. Sarwar is a recent aluma of Wayne State University. Deming, Hardy, Schulte, and Stone are Livingston County locals. In addition, Lucas Hardy and Johnny Posada serve as the principal musicians on the show. Stage managed by Annika Morrison and produced by Lindsay Harkins.

This summer production will be a first for the Brighton Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA). The BCPA hopes to grow the summer series to bring more diverse and intriguing productions to this wonderful 900 seat proscenium theater. These shows were conceived to be an enriching experience for all ages. The BCPA is also providing educational opportunities for students who are interested in a career in the performing arts by pairing them with professionals in their desired craft to be mentored throughout the production process.

Gregory Keng Strasser directed the Washington D.C. premiere of *410[GONE]* by Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig, which *The Washington Post* called “audacious, irreverent, and ultimately moving.” His vision was described as “creative and compelling” by *Broadway World* and was the editor’s pick for *MetroWeekly*. Based in Washington D.C., Strasser is an alumnus of the University of Michigan’s School of Music, Theatre, & Dance. He is the artistic apprentice at the Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics at Georgetown University and has directed and devised plays for the lab alongside Artistic Director, Derek Goldman. In addition, he has worked at The Kennedy Center, Theatre J, Rorschach Theatre, 4615 Theatre Company, UV Theatre Project, The Global Midwest, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and About Face Theatre Company. He most recently completed a fellowship in Bali, Indonesia, at Yayasan Bali Purnati where he studied Wayang Kulit puppetry, Gambuh, and Legong dance. There, he created *The Osiriyan Tales*, an adaptation of the Osiris myth from ancient Egypt.

Lindsay Harkins is director of the Brighton Center for the Performing Arts. She has a hand in all aspects of the BCPA, including programming, marketing, fundraising, and event support to name a few. The BCPA recently completed its 2017-18 season that featured performersAmy Grant, the Michigan Philharmonic, Gemini, and theatrical productions *The Spirit of Harriet Tubman* and *Pippin*. She is an alumna of University of Michigan’s School of Music, Theatre, & Dance. She has degrees in Performing Arts Management and Movement Science. She has worked with many different companies local to Ann Arbor, MI producing and marketing shows including *Twelfth Night*, *Tribes*, *Julius Caesar*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *In the Next Room, or the vibrator play*, *Almost, Maine*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Spring Awakening*, and *Big Fish*.

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