



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TOWN HALL THEATRE ANNOUNCES THE SECOND MAIN STAGE PRODUCTION
IN THE 22/23 SEASON "*The Shape of Things*" BY NEIL LABUTE**

January 30th, 2023 – Town Hall Theatre presents a story of love, art, connection, and deception in Neil LaBute's ***The Shape of Things*** as part of their Main Stage season. When normal, boring Adam and unconventional and exciting Evelyn meet in the museum Adam's life is changed for better... or worse.

A young student drifts into an ever-changing relationship with an art major while his best friends' engagement crumbles, unleashing a drama that peels back the skin of two modern-day relationships.

Featuring amazing, thoughtful, and brutally honest performances from Linda Maria Girón, Alejandro Eustaquio, Andrew Mondello, and Mayreni Sweis under the direction of Salim Razawi, *The Shape of Things* will be a play that raises questions about truth, beauty, and trust.

"My first encounter with *The Shape of Things* was early on in the pandemic," says the plays director, **Salim Razawi**. "A group of artists and I were trying to nurture our artistry without being able to gather in a theatre safely, so we gathered virtually to read and discuss plays. This particular work resonated with me, because one of the overarching themes is art and love. That being said, LaBute has a tendency to write his characters with a misogynistic undertone, and in this particular play attempts to showcase women as evil. However, I'm more interested in showcasing the internal struggle of Evelyn. Evelyn, a radical progressive, independent woman, is falling in love and wrestling with her feelings, she just doesn't want to be caught unguarded and ends up unintentionally hurting her loved ones along the way. There is so much more complexity than writing on the page, that I'm excited to explore with these incredible artists."

“Town Hall has a history of choosing controversial works, but always with the aim of exploring a larger theme rather than shock value,” says Town Hall's Managing Director **Dennis Markam**. “When Salim presented *Shape* for consideration in the season, I think what was most appealing was how much more dimension he was able to find in this piece once he subverted what one expects to find in a LaBute piece and chose to center Evelyn and what's going on with her. I think this will be one of the most interesting and challenging pieces we've included in our Main Stage season for quite some time.”

There will be a talkback on March 17th and 24th after the performance led by the dramaturg Katherine Stein.

COVID PRECAUTIONS

While rates in our area have decreased significantly and treatments for the disease have vastly improved, we at Town Hall Theatre must still take measures to keep our performers from contracting COVID-19. That is why, while our heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system is being upgraded we still are keeping some restrictions in place. Our goal is to have MERV 13 or higher air filtration when our HVAC upgrade is complete, which will help to keep our performers safer from contracting COVID-19 and may allow us to *further lift our restrictions*.

Our intention is to re-visit this policy when our HVAC upgrade is completed or when new guidance is issued.

Town Hall Theatre reserves the right to refuse service to anyone, and anyone violating this policy will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

MASKS STILL REQUIRED FOR PERFORMANCES, AND ARE OPTIONAL FOR CLASSES

Masks that cover the nose and mouth must be worn during performances, regardless of vaccination status. This policy applies to audiences, staff, Teaching Artists, students, visitors, and volunteers. Performers -- including students -- are able to choose to be masked or unmasked during performances.

- We continue not to sell the first row of seating except for patrons who use wheelchairs and one of their companions. Town Hall will provide KN95 masks to anyone who needs them, subject to availability.
- No food or drink will be permitted upstairs in the theatre to encourage masks to stay on during performances. All food and beverage must be consumed in the lobby or clearly designated outdoor areas.

PROOF OF VACCINATION IS NO LONGER REQUIRED

To view our COVID 19 Policy in detail, please visit our website at <https://www.townhalltheatre.com/covid19>.

CONTENT ADVISORY FOR THIS PRODUCTION

This show contains Adult Language, Sexism, Misogyny and Pornographic content.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Neil N. LaBute is an American playwright, film director, screenwriter, and actor. He is best-known for a play that he wrote and later adapted for film, *In the Company of Men*, which won awards from the Sundance Film Festival, the Independent Spirit Awards, and the New York Film Critics Circle. He wrote and directed the films *Your Friends & Neighbors*, *Possession*, *The Shape of Things*, *The Wicker Man*, *Some Velvet Morning*, and *Dirty Weekend*. He directed the films *Nurse Betty*, *Lakeview Terrace*, and the American adaptation of *Death at a Funeral*. LaBute created the TV series *Billy & Billie*, writing and directing all of the episodes. He is also the creator of the TV series *Van Helsing*. With his true-to-life cynical and self-absorbed characters and all-too-true social themes, he has firmly established himself as an unforgiving judge of the ugliest side of human nature.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Salim Razawi (he/him) is an actor, director, and teaching artist based in the bay Area. Previous directing credits include *Once on This Island*, *The Emeryville Horror*, *12 Angry Jurors*, and more. Acting credits include *Disgraced* at San Jose Stage Company and *Romeo* in the SF Shakespeare Festivals Educational Tour of R&J. In addition, Salim has performed with TheatreWorks, SF Playhouse, Broadway By the Bay, Altarena Playhouse, Pacific Coast Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Playhouse, Tri-Valley REP, Bay Area Children's Theatre, Tabard Theatre, Livermore Shakespeare Festival, and SF Shakespeare Festival. When not on stage Salim serves as the casting director for Shotgun Players. He can also be seen on a featured TEDx talk. SalimRazawi.com

ABOUT TOWN HALL THEATRE

Established in 1944 as the Dramateurs, Town Hall Theatre Company is the oldest continuously active theatre in Contra Costa County. Town Hall Theatre (THT) was awarded Best Theatre Troupe 2016 by Diablo Magazine, Best of The East Bay, and is the past recipient of numerous Shellie Awards, and Theatre Bay Area Awards. THT is also home to an extensive children's educational program, twice voted the Best Children's Theatre Company by Bay Area Parent Magazine. THT's home is the historic Town Hall Theatre building located at 3535 School Street in Lafayette which is owned by the Lafayette Improvement Association (LIA).

CALENDAR Information for "The Shape of Things"

WHO: Town Hall Theatre Company

WHAT: "The Shape of Things" Written by Neil LaBute
Directed by Salim Razawi

CAST: Linda Maria Girón, Alejandro Eusraquio, Andrew Mondello and Mayreni Sweis.

DATES: March 4th-25th, 2023

WHERE: Town Hall Theatre

TICKETS: \$25-40, March 24th is the Pay-What-You-Can performance.