



**REMY BUMPPPO**

*think theatre*

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## **Remy Bumpo Theatre Company Announces Its 2023 - 2024 Season**

**The New Season's Plays Take Audiences on a Journey Across Places and Time, While Speaking Directly to the Here and Now**

**CHICAGO – Artistic Director Marti Lyons** and **Remy Bumpo Theatre Company**, currently presenting the world premiere of Jessica Dickey's *Galileo's Daughter* through May 14, is pleased to announce its 2023 - 2024 season. The new season includes ***Blues for an Alabama Sky* by Pearl Cleage, September 14 - October 15**, directed by **Mikael Burke** and ***Love Song* by John Kolvenbach, March 21 - April 21, 2024**, directed by **Artistic Director Marti Lyons**. All performances will be at Theater Wit, 1229 West Belmont Avenue in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood. Subscriptions for the 2023 - 2024 season are \$50 - \$100 and go on sale Friday, April 28 online at [RemyBumpo.org](http://RemyBumpo.org). Single tickets for the productions will be available Wednesday, July 19.

**Artistic Director Marti Lyons** reflected on the new Remy Bumpo season, "This coming season, we will present two productions that showcase the boldness of vision, caliber of design, and excellence in performance for which Remy Bumpo is known. These plays, one dramatic and one comedic, both have language that spills off the page and stories that grip the heart. Throughout our new season, Remy Bumpo will take audiences on a journey across places and time, all the while speaking directly to the here and now. I am proud to present *Blues for an Alabama Sky* and *Love Song* for our 2023-2024 season."

"Remy Bumpo, like theaters and cultural institutions around the world, continues to feel the repercussions of the pandemic. Due to these lasting effects and our desire to continue Remy Bumpo's long standing commitment to breathe new life into the seminal works of established playwrights and to unearth modern and next-wave classics, we are presenting a two-show 2023-2024 season," added **Executive Director Margaret McCloskey**. "The new season, selected by Marti and the company, stays true to our mission as it includes a cherished work by one of the most important playwrights of the last 50 years, Pearl Cleage, and a revival of a lovely early 21st-century work by a true American talent, John Kolvenbach."

The Remy Bumpo Theatre Company's 2023 - 2024 season includes:

***Blues for an Alabama Sky***

**By Pearl Cleage**

**Directed by Mikael Burke**

**September 14 - October 15**

Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.

Previews: Thursday, Sept. 14 at 7:30 p.m., Friday, Sept. 15 at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 16 at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 17 at 2:30 p.m.

**Press Opening: Monday, Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m.**

Performance schedule: Thursdays and Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$28 - \$55

Single tickets go on sale: Wednesday, July 19

“Pearl Cleage’s masterful work is a contemporary classic,” **Artistic Director Lyons commented.** “The play is set in Harlem in 1930, it was written in 1995, and it is searingly relevant today. I am a long-time fan of Cleage’s writing and it is a joy to bring her charming, pressing, and unforgettable story to our stage.”

*Blues for an Alabama Sky* by Pearl Cleage is a play about change, struggle, and joy set against the tumultuous backdrop of prohibition, the Jazz Age and the dawning of The Great Depression. It’s 1930 in Harlem and jazz singer Angel has just gotten fired from The Cotton Club. Supported by her closest friends, Angel hopes for her next big break as costume designer Guy imagines sewing dresses in Paris and Delia works to bring family planning centers to the community. But all of their dreams are put in jeopardy when Angel meets Leland, a recent Alabama transplant. Will he be the true love Angel has been waiting for or will he forever alter the dynamic of their precious inner circle?

### ***Love Song***

**By John Kolvenbach**

**Directed by Marti Lyons**

March 21 - April 21, 2024

Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont Ave.

Previews: Thursday, March 21 at 7:30 p.m., Friday, March 22 at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 23 at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, March 24 at 2:30 p.m.

**Press Opening: Monday, March 25, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.**

Performance schedule: Thursdays and Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 2:30 and 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$28 - \$55

Single tickets go on sale: Wednesday, July 19

“In 2006, I saw a production of John Klovenbach’s *Love Song* while studying in London. It has stuck with me ever since,” **said Artistic Director Lyons.** “*Love Song* explores love of many kinds, but at the center is the love between two siblings. This focus on this bond is what makes this play so special to me. I am delighted to bring this piece to Remy Bumpo and to direct it in the coming season.”

An off-kilter romantic comedy, *Love Song* is a quick-witted exploration of the countless complexities of love and the endless capacity of the heart. Beane has always been different. Joan, his sister, is his only real bridge to the outside world, but she is consumed with her own life, climbing the corporate ladder and sparring with her husband, Harry. When Beane falls madly in love with Molly, Beane’s world suddenly expands and the seismic shift forces all of them to reexamine their own relationships and discover new facets of human connection.

### **ABOUT PEARL CLEAGE, *Blues for an Alabama Sky* playwright**

[Pearl Cleage](#) (she/her/hers) is an Atlanta-based writer whose plays include *Pointing At The Moon*, *What I Learned In Paris*, *Flyin’ West*, *Blues For An Alabama Sky* and

*Bourbon At The Border*, commissioned and directed by Kenny Leon at the Alliance Theatre. She is also the author of *A Song For Coretta*, written in 2007 during Cleage's time as Cosby Professor in Women's Studies at Spelman College. Her play, *The Nacirema Society Requests The Honor of Your Presence at a Celebration of Their First One Hundred Years*, was commissioned by the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and premiered in 2010, in a joint production by the ASF and Atlanta's Alliance Theatre, directed by Susan Booth. Her plays have also been performed at Arena Stage, Hartford Stage, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Huntington Theatre, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, the Long Wharf Theatre, Just US Theatre, True Colors Theatre, Bushfire Theatre, the Intiman Theatre, St. Louis Black Repertory Company and Seven Stages. She is also an accomplished performance artist, often working in collaboration with her husband, writer Zaron W. Burnett, Jr. They have performed at the National Black Arts Festival, the National Black Theatre Festival and colleges and universities across the country. Cleage and Burnett also collaborated with performance artists Idris Ackamoor and Rhodessa Jones on the script for *The Love Project*, which premiered at the National Black Theatre Festival in 2008 and is currently touring the country. Cleage is also an accomplished novelist. Her novels include "What Looks Like Crazy on an Ordinary Day," a *New York Times* bestseller and an Oprah Book Club selection, "I Wish I Had a Red Dress," "Some Things I Never Thought I'd Do," "Babylon Sisters," "Baby Brother's Blues," "Seen It All and Done the Rest" and "Till You Hear from Me." She is also the author of "Mad at Miles: A Blackwoman's Guide to Truth," a groundbreaking work of race and gender and "We Speak Your Names," a praise poem commissioned by Oprah Winfrey for her 2005 celebration of legendary African American women and written in collaboration with Zaron Burnett. Cleage has also written for magazines, including "Essence," "Vibe," "Rap Pages" and "Ms." In addition to her work as the founding editor of "Catalyst" magazine, a literary journal, she was a regular columnist for the *Atlanta Tribune* for ten years, winning many awards for her thought-provoking columns. She has also written for TheDefendersOnLine.com. Cleage has been awarded grants in support of her work from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Fulton County Arts Council, the Georgia Council on the Arts, the Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs and the Coca-Cola Foundation. Her work has earned her many awards and honors, including an NAACP Image Award for fiction in 2008. Pearl Cleage is represented by Ron Gwiazda at Abrams Artists Agency in New York City. She also maintains a Facebook fan page.

#### **ABOUT JOHN KOLVENBACH, *Love Song* playwright**

John Kolvenbach (he/him/his) is the author of *Love Song, on an average day, Gizmo Love, The Gravity of Means* and the recently completed *Fabuloso*. *On an average day* premiered at the Comedy Theatre on the West End, starring Woody Harrelson and Kyle MacLachlan, directed by John Crowley, *Gizmo Love* premiered at WHAT on Cape Cod and opened in London in 2006. *The Gravity of Means* premiered at MCC in New York. Kolvenbach has recently been commissioned by South Coast Repertory for a new play.

#### **ABOUT REMY BUMPPO THEATRE COMPANY**

Remy Bumpo Theatre Company expands and enriches their community's view of the world, and their own, by producing both the great plays of the past and the important plays of today. As an ensemble-driven theater company, Remy Bumpo authors a more humane culture that listens to, and seeks to understand, the voices, the ideas and the stories of one another.

Since its inception in 1996, Remy Bumpo has produced a blend of modern classics and complex contemporary works, presented in an intimate setting with clarity, wit

and passion. We invite audiences to engage directly with the art through conversation with the artists.

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