

What's new:



- Farm animals celebrate life without a human master in Steppenwolf for Young Adults' production of "Animal Farm," which has been extended through Nov. 16.
Courtesy of Steppenwolf

- Lauren Hirte returns as the title character in Lookingglass Theatre's remount of "Lookingglass Alice" at Chicago's Water Tower Water Works.
- MadKap Productions presents Beth Henley's dramedy about family dysfunction and reconciliation "Crimes of the Heart," beginning Friday, Nov. 7, at the Skokie Theatre, 7924 Lincoln Ave., Skokie. Artistic director Wayne Mell helms the production, which centers on a woman coping with her 30th birthday, her estranged sister recently returned home and their youngest sister, who's been arrested on charges of shooting her politician husband. The show runs through Nov. 23. (847) 677-7761 or skokietheatre.org.
- Performances begin Friday Nov. 7, for eta Creative Arts Foundation's annual, family-friendly holiday offering, "If Scrooge Was a Brother," a riff on Charles Dickens' classic by Ekundayo Bandele. It runs through Dec. 28 at 7558 S. South Chicago Ave., Chicago. (773) 752-3955 or etacreativearts.org.
- Profiles Theatre, 4139 N. Broadway, Chicago, revives its seasonal production of "Hellcab," Will Kern's well-loved dramedy about a day in the life of a beleaguered cabbie as he makes his way through Chicago during a long Christmas Eve shift. Starring as the cabbie is Richard Cotovsky in a role he played more than 200 times in Famous Door Theatre's original 1992 production. Ensemble member Eric Burgher directs a cast of 34. Previews begin Friday, Nov. 7. The show opens Nov. 13. (773) 549-1815 or profilestheatre.org.
- The Actors Gymnasium puts its own circus-inspired spin on William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" titled "A Circus Night's Dream." It's written and directed by Chris Matthews and features circus choreography by Sylvia Hernandez-DiStasi and dance choreography by Topeka Ellis. Performances run Saturday, Nov. 8, and Sunday, Nov. 9, and Nov. 15 and 16, at the Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes St., Evanston. (847) 328-2795 or actorsgymnasium.org.
- Previews begin Saturday, Nov. 8, for Teatro Vista's season opening production of "Tamer of Horses" by William Mastrosimone. Artistic associate Ron OJ Parson directs the play about a runaway from a detention center who finds refuge on a New Jersey farm where he's befriended by a former teacher. The show opens Thursday, Nov. 13, at The Victory Gardens Biograph Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago. (773) 871-3000 or teatrovista.org or victorygardens.org.
- "The Guide to Being Single," a new musical comedy by Kaitlin Gilgenbach and Alexi Kavin, is set in Chicago's Wrigleyville neighborhood and centered around a new self-help book that guarantees the reader "entanglements ... without getting entangled" so long he or she follows the rules correctly. Previews for the Underscore Theatre world premiere begin Saturday, Nov. 8, at Collaboraction Theatre, 1579 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago. The show opens Nov. 11. See underscoretheatre.org.
- Gorilla Tango Theatre, 1919 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, presents the world premiere of "The Underground Effect," a play about interracial dating by writer-director Berylanne Lynch of B-Anne Productions, a Lake County-based ensemble. The show runs at 7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 8, and 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 9. (773) 598-4549 or gorillatango.com.
- Bailiwick Chicago hosts its annual casting auction on Saturday Nov. 8, at Michelle's Ballroom, 2800 N. Belmont Ave., Chicago. The company will auction off more than 40 roles in its production of the musical "Wonderful Town" during the fundraiser, which also includes live entertainment, a silent auction, hors d'oeuvres and an open bar. Doors



open at 5:45 p.m. and the auction begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$75 and are available at castingauction.com.

"Wonderful Town" runs Feb. 24 to 28, 2015, at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago.

- Academy Award nominee and A Red Orchid ensemble member Michael Shannon hosts the company's annual gala Saturday, Nov. 8, at 110 W. Illinois St., Chicago. The fundraiser includes cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and an auction from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Dinner follows from 7 to 9:30 p.m. A benefit cocktail party takes place at The Underground, 56 W. Illinois St., Chicago, from 9:30 to 11 p.m. VIP dinner tickets are \$300. Cocktail party tickets are \$75. (312) 943-8722 or aredorchidtheatre.org.

- Eclipse Theatre Company concludes its Lynn Nottage season with "Mud, River, Stone" about an African-American couple vacationing in Africa who get lost and find themselves stranded in a once-grand hotel during the rainy season. Their comic misadventure takes a turn when the bellhop takes the guests hostage. Previews continue through Saturday, Nov. 8, at the Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport Ave., Chicago. The show, directed by Andrea J. Dymond in her Eclipse directing debut, opens Sunday, Nov. 9. (773) 935-6875 or eclipse theatre.com.

- Members of the Brown Paper Box Co. announce their next cabaret series, "BPB Yearbook: A Throwback Cabaret," which takes place at 7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 9, and at 8 p.m. Monday, Nov. 10, at Davenport's Piano Bar & Cabaret, 1383 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago. Tickets are \$15 plus a two drink minimum. See brownpaperbox.org for more information.

- Six actors portray 40 characters in Strawdog Theatre Company's new adaptation of Charles Dickens' "Great Expectations." It opens Monday, Nov. 10, at 3829 N. Broadway St., Chicago, following a preview fundraiser at 7 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 9. Jason W. Gerace makes his Strawdog directing debut with the production about a young, impoverished orphan named Pip who's propelled into the upper class thanks to the generosity of an anonymous benefactor. (773) 528-9696 or strawdog.org.

- Lookingglass Theatre Company remounts its signature, namesake production "Lookingglass Alice," adapted from Lewis Carroll's works and produced in conjunction with Evanston's The Actors Gymnasium. Lauren Hirte shares the titular role she created with fellow ensemble member Lindsey Noel Whiting. David Catlin once again directs his adaptation of this coming-of-age tale that coincides with the 150th anniversary of the publication of "Alice in Wonderland." Previews begin Wednesday, Nov. 12, at Water Tower Water Works, 821 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago. The show opens Nov. 22. (312) 337-0665 or lookingglasstheatre.org.

- Steppenwolf Theatre veterans and Tony Award winners Rondi Reed and John Mahoney will perform during Season of Concern's 7th Annual Larry Sloan Awards beginning at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 10, at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago. The actors perform James Prideaux's "Postcards," about two people who write postcards without any response until they address the cards to famous dead folks. TimeLine Theatre will receive the Partnership Award during the fundraiser for the organization that assists theater artists living with serious illnesses or facing health emergencies including HIV/AIDS. VIP tickets are \$75 and include reserved seating. General admission tickets are \$35. See stage773.com.

- Truman Capote's autobiographical "A Christmas Memory," about a young boy's memories of his eccentric relatives during a memorable Depression era Christmas, is the holiday offering from Theatre at the Center, 1040 Ridge Road, Munster, Indiana. William Pullinsi directs the production, written by Duane Pool and featuring music by Larry Grossman and lyrics by Carol Hall. The cast includes Paula Scrofano and John Reeder and marks the debut of 14-year-old Luke Michael Klein. (219) 836-3255 or (800) 511-1552 or theatreatthecenter.com.

- Porchlight Music Theatre has extended its 20th anniversary production of "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street" starring David Girolmo and Rebecca Finnegan and directed by Michael Weber and music director Doug Peck. Performances run through Nov. 16, at Stage 773, 1225 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago. (773) 777-9884 or porchlightmusictheatre.org.

- Steppenwolf Theatre extended its 90-minute, young adults production -- a world premiere adaptation of "Animal Farm" by George Orwell. Farm animals overthrow their human master in an attempt to create an ideal society, which is thwarted by some increasingly power-hungry animals. Performances continue through Nov. 16 at 1650 N. Halsted St., Chicago. 9312) 335-1650 or steppenwolf.org.

- Trap Door Theatre this week took its hit show "Regarding the Just," an adaptation of Albert Camus' "Les Justes," on a six-week tour of France.

-- Barbara Vitello