



For immediate release
August 31, 2016

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Near West Theatre presents *Urinetown*, starring youth ages 9-15

Irreverent musical satire runs September 16th – 25th

CLEVELAND – In the wake of a catastrophic drought, mega-corporation Urine Good Company has passed laws forbidding private restrooms and requiring payment for the usage of public ones, so as to conserve water. Those who do not pay for "The Privilege to Pee" are sent to a mysteriously ominous place known only as Urinetown. For twenty years the poor have been oppressed by ridiculous prices, until one day a young Public Amenity Attendant leads an uprising of the poor against the tyranny of their oppressors.

Sound absurd or laughable? Perhaps it should – *Urinetown* is widely known for its “wickedly modern wit.” In *Urinetown*, no one is safe from scrutiny. Overt jabs at Big Business, social injustice, and even at musicals themselves pepper the production with hilarity and strike a keen balance with content no *Urinetown* theatergoer can ignore: the blatant and often unsettling commentary on many issues that are all too familiar in our current sociopolitical climate. Inspired by the works of Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, underlying the laughs of *Urinetown* lurk pointed observations on social and political revolution, capitalist greed, and how environmental catastrophes could affect an entire society. This falls in line with Brecht’s Epic Theatre, which emphasized that the art of theater is both entertaining *and* educational.

Though the show is traditionally presented with an adult cast, Near West Theatre has instead engaged 42 talented youth, ages 9-15, to interpret this irreverent, sophisticated satire. Placing it in the hands of these thoughtful youth results in a particularly compelling perspective – it is powerful to see these harsh truths through their eyes, and impressive to experience their ability to skillfully tackle this challenging material.

Please Note: We will hold our post-show *Urinetown* Talkback on Friday, September 23rd. This Talkback is FREE and open to all, even if you do not attend the show that evening. It will begin after that evening’s show concludes. Meet the cast, hear about the rehearsal and production process, and explore the content of the show with the performers who bring it all to life!

As always, Near West Theatre’s volunteer actors are diverse in race, neighborhood, age, size, physical ability, and acting experience. They range from city and suburban residents on stage for the first time, to actors familiar to the Near West stage and Northeast Ohio audiences. With this eighth production in their new facility, Near West continues to enjoy and explore the possibilities that their new wheelchair accessible, climate controlled building provides.

Reserved Star Seat tickets are \$25; General Admission is \$10 for adults and \$8 for children 12 and under. Tickets are available at nearwesttheatre.org or by calling 216-961-6391 weekdays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The theater, constructed as part of the Gordon Square Arts District capital campaign, is at 6702 Detroit Avenue.

Near West Theatre is grateful for ongoing operating support from the [Cuyahoga Arts and Culture](#), [Ohio Arts Council](#), [Greater Cleveland Community Shares](#), and additional 2016-2017 season support from Patron Sponsor [Consolidated Solutions](#).

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Urinetown, the Musical

Book & Lyrics by Greg Kotis

Music & Lyrics by Mark Hollmann

Near West Theatre, September 16-25, 2016

Cast

Felix Albino (Hot Blades Harry), Morgan Alten, Andy Antos, Justice Artis, Delia Brennan (Penelope Pennywise), Kylie Colvin, Kierstan Conway (Josephine "Ma" Strong), Josh Davis (Officer Barrel), Adelisa DeJesus, Zoe Douglas (Hope Cladwell), Rylie Elswick (Joseph "Old Man" Strong), Giles Foster, Drew Gibson, Dylan Grosh-Hoy (Officer Lockstock), Julia Gutia, Emma Gyorki, Zoe Hess, Hannah Horton, Corinne Howery, CJ Jorgensen (Mr. McQueen), Nate Jorgensen (Caldwell B. Cladwell), Bryen Kilbane, Ste-vee Lang, Jack Lange, Samantha Manoloff, Chloe Mihelich, Joshua Mink, Elden Mortensen, Evan Mortensen, Ella Nosse, Isabella Novosel, Sophie O'Leary (Little Sally), Finn O'Malia, Diamond Rhodes, Alex Schwartz, Lola Seoane, Ian Stewart (Senator Fipp), Cole Tarantowski (Bobby Strong), Tannayia Thomas, Dashiell Tidrick, Morgan Williams, and Ally Yellets (Little Becky Two Shoes).

Production staff

Director: Kelcie Nicole Dugger. **Music Directors:** Scott Pyle & Rachel Woods. **Conductors/Keyboard:** Scott Pyle & Rachel Woods. **Production Manager:** Michael Stein. **Technical Director/Facilities Manager:** Josh Padgett. **Assistant Technical Director:** Perren Hedderson. **Scenic & Properties Designer:** Cameron Caley Michalak. **Prop Master:** Rachel Paul. **Lighting Designer:** Michael Stein. **Sound Designer:** Joshua Caraballo. **Costume Designer:** Jen Ryan. **Choreographer:** Josh Landis. **Stage Manager:** Kate Atherton. **Assistant Stage Managers:** Allan Stubbs & Bethy Jarus.

Performance dates

Fri., **Sept. 16** – 7:30 p.m. Fri., **Sept. 23** – 7:30 p.m.
Sat., **Sept. 17** – 7:30 p.m. Sat., **Sept. 24** – 7:30 p.m.
Sun., **Sept. 18** – 3:00 p.m. Sun., **Sept. 25** – 3:00 p.m.

Suggested performance listing:

Near West Theatre, 6702 Detroit Ave., Cleveland's Gordon Square Arts District. 216-961-6391 or nearwesttheatre.org. "Urinetown, the Musical" September 16, 17, 23, & 24 at **7:30 p.m.**; September 18 & 25 at **3 p.m.** Reserved Star Seat: \$25; General Admission: \$10 adults, \$8 children ages 12 and under. "Urinetown, the Musical" is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International: www.mti.com.