

24/25 Performance Season

JOHN PROCTOR  
IS THE VILLAIN

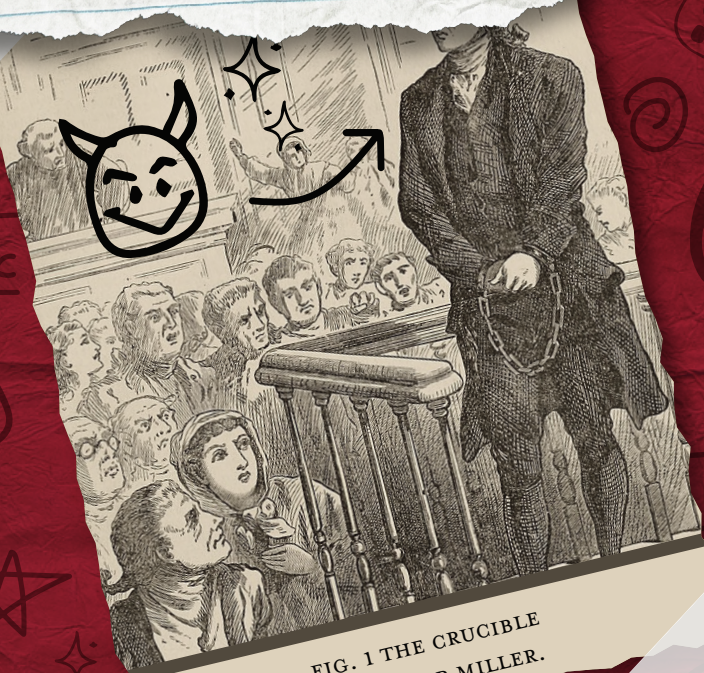


FIG. 1 THE CRUCIBLE  
BY ARTHUR MILLER.

November 21 - 24, 2024  
Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre

**M** | THEATRE & DRAMA

U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance Department of Theatre & Drama presents

# JOHN PROCTOR IS THE VILLAIN

Written by **Kimberly Belflower**

First commissioned by the Farm Theater in 2017 and workshopped there in 2018 and at Ojai Playwrights Conference in 2019, "John Proctor Is the Villain" was staged at Centre College in 2018, at Furman University and Rollins College in 2019, and professionally at DC's Studio Theatre in 2022. The Broadway premiere is scheduled for spring 2025.

Director

**Halena Kays**

Assistant Director

**Naomi Parr‡**

Scenic Designer

**Jungah Han**

Lighting Designer

**Elianna Kruskal‡**

Costume Designer

**Summer Wasung‡**

Hair & Makeup Designer

**Brittany Crinson**

Sound Designer

**Henry Reynolds**

Sound Design Associates

**Zak Kerhoulas‡, Victor Kim‡**

Sound Assistant

**Victoria Kvasnikov‡**

Projection Design

**Christian DeAngelis**

Dramaturg

**Karin Waidley**

Associate Dramaturg

**Reese Leif‡**

Dialect Coach

**Jeremy Sortore**

Intimacy and Cultural

Consultant

**Raja Benz**

Production Stage Manager

**Esther Hwang‡**

Assistant Scenic Design

**Brooke Steele‡**

***John Proctor Is the Villain* will be presented with one intermission.**

**time and place:** spring semester, junior year, 2018

Helen County High, the only high school in a one-stoplight town, northeast Georgia  
all scenes are in Mr. Smith's classroom except for one, which is located behind a gas station

‡SMTD Student

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*John Proctor Is the Villain* is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC, servicing the Dramatists Play Service collection. ([www.dramatists.com](http://www.dramatists.com)).

"Green Light" by Jack Antonoff, Joel Little, Ella Yelich-O'Connor

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Performed by Lorde

Written by Ella Marija Lani Yelich O'Connor

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**The performers in this production are students in the Department of Theatre & Drama. The designers for this production are students, faculty, and/or guests of SMTD. Scenery, costumes, properties, sound, and lighting were realized by the students and staff of University Productions, the producing unit of SMTD. Thank you for supporting our educational mission.**

Latecomers will be seated at a suitable break. As a courtesy to others, please turn off cellular phones and pagers and refrain from texting during the performance. Photography, audio recording, and videotaping of any kind are not permitted.

## **STATEMENT ON THE ANISHINAABE LAND TRANSFER**

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Anishinaabeg gaa bi dinokiiwaad temigad manda Michigan Kichi Kinoomaagegamig. Mdaaswinshwaaswaakshimdaaswishiniizhawaaswi gii-sababoonagak, Ojibweg, Odawaag, minwaa Bodwe'aadamiig wiiba gii-miigwena'aa maamoonjiniibina Kichi Kinoomaagegamigoong wi pii-gaa aanjibiigaadeg Kichi-Naakonigewinning, debendang manda aki, mampii Niisaajwan, gewiinwaa niijaansiwaan ji kinoomaagaazinid. Daapanaming ninda kidwinan, megwaa minwaa gaa bi aankoosejig zhinda akiing minwaa gii-miigwewaad Kichi-Kinoomaagegamigoong aanji-daapinanigaade minwaa mshkowenjigaade.

The University of Michigan is located on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe people. In 1817, the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodewadami Nations made the largest single land transfer to the University of Michigan. This was offered ceremonially as a gift through the Treaty at the Foot of the Rapids so that their children could be educated. Through these words of acknowledgment, their contemporary and ancestral ties to the land and their contributions to the University are renewed and reaffirmed.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

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Shelby Holcomb

**Brynn Aaronson**

Beth Powell

**Orion Bracha**

Nell Shaw

**Amelia Shalomay Fontaine**

Ivy Watkins

**Abby Lyons**

Raelynn Nix

**Sarah Josefina Hartmus**

Bailey Gallagher

**Sophia Santos Ufkes**

Carter Smith

**Hugh Finnigan**

Mason Adams

**Raymond Ocasio IV**

Lee Turner

**Ethan Steiner**

Student Ensemble/Swings

**Molly Cesanek, Maya Guacci, Darla Hand, Annika**

**Juliusson, Daniel Simpson**

## ABOUT THE CAST

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**Brynn Aaronson** (*Shelby Holcomb*) Senior, BFA Acting, Evanston, IL

**Orion Bracha** (*Beth Powell*) Sophomore, BFA Acting, New York, NY

**Molly Cesanek** (*Student Ensemble/Swing*) Senior, BFA InterArts Performance, Warrenton, VA

**Hugh Finnigan** (*Carter Smith*) Junior, BFA Acting, Rochester, NY

**Amelia Shalomay Fontaine** (*Nell Shaw*) Sophomore, BFA Acting, Ann Arbor, MI

**Maya Guacci** (*Student Ensemble/Swing*) Sophomore, BFA Acting, Sayville, NY

**Darla Hand** (*Student Ensemble/Swing*) Junior, BA Music, Whitmore Lake, MI

**Sarah Josefina Hartmus** (*Raelynn Nix*) Junior, BFA Acting, Rochester Hills, MI

**Annika Juliusson** (*Student Ensemble/Swing*) Sophomore, BFA Acting, Winnetka, IL

**Abby Lyons** (*Ivy Watkins*) Sophomore, BFA Acting, Fairfax, VA

**Raymond Ocasio IV** (*Mason Adams*) Sophomore, BFA Acting, Ridgewood, NJ

**Daniel Simpson** (*Student Ensemble/Swing*) Sophomore, BTA Performing Arts Management/BBA Business Administration, Park Ridge, NJ

**Ethan Steiner** (*Lee Turner*) Junior, BFA Acting, Ann Arbor, MI

**Sophia Santos Ufkes** (*Bailey Gallagher*) Sophomore, BFA Acting, Seattle, WA

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Kimberly Belflower** (*Playwright*) is a playwright and educator originally from a small town in Appalachian Georgia. She earned her MFA from the University of Texas at Austin and teaches playwriting at Emory University in Atlanta.

Belflower's play *John Proctor Is the Villain* had its world premiere in 2022 at Studio Theatre and will open on Broadway in spring 2025. Her other plays include *Lost Girl*, which had its world premiere in 2018 at Milwaukee Rep and earned the Kennedy Center Darrell Ayers National Playwriting Award; and *Saint Pigtail*, which was commissioned and developed by Studio Theatre and was a 2023 O'Neill finalist from the National Playwrights Conference.



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## "THE CRUCIBLE" SYNOPSIS

*The Crucible*, one of the classics of American theatre, was originally written by U-M grad Arthur Miller and published in 1953. In it, Miller uses the historical Salem witch trials of 1692 as an allegory for the contemporary Red Scare of McCarthyism happening around him.

The story centers around the New England town of Salem, Massachusetts, and the mass hysteria that spreads from a group of girls who are caught dancing in the woods by the local reverend. Accusations of witchcraft and false confessions spread through the town, eventually reaching the household of farmer John Proctor and his wife, Elizabeth. Proctor had previously had an affair with Abigail Williams, the ringleader of the young girls and the reverend's niece and ward.

In an effort to restore reason to the town – and to hide his affair

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and preserve his good name – Proctor seeks to end the cycle of fraudulent accusations and confessions.

In the end, Proctor himself confesses to witchcraft, though he later tears up his confession in a last-ditch effort to end the witch-hunt hysteria. He ultimately goes to the gallows – a victim of a culture of paranoia as well as his own fatal flaws.

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## **FROM THE DRAMATURGS**

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*“Abuse of power comes as no surprise.”*

—Jenny Holzer

While theatre historians may not consider *John Proctor Is the Villain* to be a period piece quite yet, the world has changed dramatically since the events of this play.

The Me Too movement, founded by activist Tarana Burke in 2006, gained widespread attention in 2018 when actress Alyssa Milano encouraged victims of sexual assault and harassment to use #MeToo on social media, highlighting the pervasive misconduct and abuse of power, particularly in workplaces. The piece of theatre we are about to engage with takes place in early 2018 in a world before Harvey Weinstein was convicted of sexual assault and imprisoned for his actions. Since the play's original premiere, 24 states have passed workplace anti-harassment bills and a large number of institutions are being held accountable for allowing unsafe and inappropriate working environments: a major win for the cause. However, the often covert ability to leverage one's power against vulnerable populations is still alive and well in spaces across the globe.

While *John Proctor Is the Villain* is permanently rooted in the events of 2018, its influence and importance are still apparent to this day; this fact is especially clear following the announcement of its spring 2025 Broadway run, which will allow the story to reach a new, extensive audience. This piece sparkles with urgency and rage, providing a voice not only to young women

## **FROM THE DRAMATURGS**

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of this generation but all people who have been preyed upon by those willing to exploit and abuse systems of power.

Throughout this process, our creative team elected to center the work of American conceptual artist Jenny Holzer, whose creations center the display of words and ideas in public spaces. Much of Holzer's work focuses on feminism, sexism, and the abuse of power. Many of the artist's quotes can be seen projected onstage during transitions. Holzer's unapologetic defiance of societal norms aligns closely with Kimberly Belflower's narrative in this play, where she interrogates the lasting impact of patriarchal systems, purity culture, and power imbalance. By incorporating Holzer's unapologetic work into our production's design, we are shining a light on how societal norms are portrayed in this play and, ultimately, called into question.

As we venture into rural Georgia to follow a rollercoaster-like story of teenage girlhood, it's important that we consider the complex interplay of gender, sexuality, upbringing, and religion that shape these girls' worldviews. By engaging with this piece, we not only get to see life through the eyes of these characters – we also have the rare opportunity to sit with ourselves and consider the social and political power we give to ideas, concepts, and people in our everyday lives.

—Reese Leif, Associate Dramaturg

**For more information about  
this show, scan here:**





## ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

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**Brittany Crinson** (*Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer*) is the wig, hair, and makeup designer for all of UProd. This is her first year as a full-time staff member as the hair and makeup manager. Crinson is thrilled to have moved back to Michigan, where she was born and raised. She has spent the last decade in Chicago working for the Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Joffrey Ballet and on several projects for TV and film, including the HBO MAX show *Somebody Somewhere* and Hulu's *The Bear*.

**Christian DeAngelis** (*Projection Designer*) is very excited to be teaching at the University of Michigan. DeAngelis has designed and worked in lighting and projections all over the country. Select credits include working for Mint Theatre Company in New York, 5th Avenue in Seattle, City Theatre Company in Pittsburgh, Eugene O' Neill Theatre Center in Connecticut, and La Jolla Playhouse in California, and as a Broadway assistant/associate. Tours include *Stars on Ice*, *Grease*, and Parson's Dance Company. Event work includes Google, Amazon, and Blue Flame. Broadway assistant/associate credits include *Dr. Zhivago*, *Bonnie & Clyde*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, and *Guys and Dolls*. He earned a Drama Desk nomination for *Lizzie Borden* in New York, Henry Hewes Design Award Nomination for *Fatal Weakness* at Mint Theatre Company in New York, and Richmond Critics Circle Nominations for *Preludes* in Virginia. He received his education from the University of California, San Diego (MFA) and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (BFA). He is a member of USA829 and Local ACT in New York.

**Jungah Han** (*Scenic Designer*) is a freelance set designer in theatre, film, and television. Design credits: *The Duat*, *Disinform*, *A Little Night Music*, *The Chinese Lady*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *The Power of the Dog*, *Bernarda Alba*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Barber of Seville*, *The House That Will Not Stand*, *Vier Letzte Lieder*, *My Onliness*, *Numbness: Chapter 2*, *Shockheaded Peter*, *When the*

## ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

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*Rain Stops Falling, Coriolanus, Paradise Lost, Cardboard Piano, Measure for Measure, Solo Bach, and No Exit.* Broadway & International associate set design credits: *Lempicka* (Longacre), *Sally and Tom* (Public), *Waiting for Godot* (TFANA), *Jagged Little Pill, The Empire of Light* (Théâtre National de Bretagne), *Red Waters* (Opéra de Rennes), *Derren Brown Secret, Once on This Island, Frankie & Johnny in the Clair de Lune, Harlequinade, Rigoletto* (Die Staatsoper Unter den Linden). MFA from David Geffen School of Drama at Yale. She teaches scenic design at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. [www.jungahhan.com](http://www.jungahhan.com)

**Esther Hwang** (*Production Stage Manager*) is a junior at the University of Michigan pursuing a BFA in theatre design and production with a concentration in stage management. Select recent credits include PSM of MT 25 Senior Entrance (UMICH musical theatre department), *Tempest, Henry V, R&J: What's in a Name?* (Prague Shakespeare Company), *Catch Me If You Can* (MUSKET). All love to family and friends:)

**Halena Kays** (*Director*) is a founding member of the artistic collaborative the Ruffians, an artistic associate with the Chicago Neo-Futurists, an artistic affiliate of American Blues Theatre, a former member of the Big Apple Circus Clown Care unit, past artistic director of the Hypocrites, former co-artistic curator for Theater on the Lake, and co-founder and former artistic director of Playmakers Lab. Kays has been nominated for Jefferson awards for Best Supporting Actress, Best Direction, Best New Work, and Best Production; was named one of the top 50 "players" in Chicago theater by NewCity; is a recipient of the prestigious 3Arts Award; and received a signed letter from Mr. Rogers saying she was "special" in 1978. She is a UT-Austin and Northwestern grad, a proud member of SDC, and head of directing at the University of Michigan. Thanks to Ripley.

**Elianna Kruskal** (*Lighting Designer*) is a senior getting a BFA in

## **ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM**

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theatre design and production, concentrating in lighting design and programming, and a BA in social theory and practice. They are so excited to be designing *John Proctor Is the Villain*, after spending the summer interning at Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC) in NYC. Previous U-M lighting design credits include: *Pippin: Her Life and Times*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Falsettos*, *Eurydice*, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *The Humans*, *Catch Me If You Can* (assoc.), *Bonnets* (asst.), and *Dogfight* (asst.). He would like to thank the entire *John Proctor* team for their collaboration in this process!

**Jeremy Sortore** (*Voice/Dialect Coach*) (he/him) is an assistant professor in the Department of Theatre & Drama. Regional: American Repertory Theater, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Colorado Shakespeare Festival. Member, National Alliance of Acting Teachers; associate faculty, Theatrical Intimacy Education; associate teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework; certified teacher of Knight-Thompson Speechwork; PAVA-recognized vocologist; editorial board, *Journal of Consent-Based Performance*; associate editor, *Voice & Speech Review*. Education: Moscow Art Theater School/American Repertory Theater Institute at Harvard University. [www.JeremySortore.com](http://www.JeremySortore.com)

**Karin Waidley** (*Dramaturg*) is a teacher, artist, and scholar. She has degrees from Cal Berkeley, Northwestern, and University of Washington. Before receiving her PhD focusing on the use of theatre to prevent violence, she founded a theatre program for adjudicated youth outside of Boulder, Colorado. Waidley spent 12 years as a professor and the director of the theatre program at Western Colorado University, specializing in devising theatre for social justice. She has been awarded multiple grants and awards for developing new work in collaboration with students. Waidley was a Fulbright Scholar in 2017-18 and a Fulbright Specialist in 2022, both in Kenya. She

## **ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM**

recently worked as the director of education for the prevention of gender-based violence at the Community Safety Network in Jackson, Wyoming; as a visiting professor at Bucknell University and University of Redlands; and now as the resident dramaturg in University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre & Dance. Waidley directs and dramaturgs regularly in both academic and professional settings, including a recent collaboration with the Theatre Company of Kenya at the Kenya International Theatre Festival. Her current research links storytelling and embodied performance practices with the neurobiology of trauma. She has published in *Theatre/Practice*, *Texas Theatre Journal*, *Multilingual Margins*, *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, and the *Kenya International Theatre Journal*. She is the editor for *Theatre/Practice* journal and is currently working with a Kenyan colleague on a book about Kenyan theatre history and contemporary performance.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Special thanks to SAPAC (the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center) for their collaboration and support of this production.



# PRODUCTION CREW

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1st ASM **Justin Comini**

2nd ASMs **Katrina Lin, Yuchen Wu**

Lead Electrician **Isabelle Hopf**

Charge Scenic Artist **Ellie Vice**

Theatrical Lighting **Eliza Anker, Shira Baker, Sydney Geysbeek, Morgan Gomes, Elianna Kruskal, Brandon Malin, Kathleen Stanton-Sharpless, William Webster, Andrew Wilson, Tate Zeleznik, Gabriela Ribeiro Znamensky & Theatre 250/252/262 Students**

Scenic Painting **Miles Hionis, Bella Spagnuolo, Martha Sprout, Lauren Streng, Ellie Vice^, Amber Walters, Angela Wu & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Props **Andy Blatt, Laney Carnes, Aquila Ewald, Dallas Fadul, Audrey Hollenbaugh, Banks Krause, Lexi Lake, Tessie Morales, Leah Stchur & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Scenery **Rohan Abernathy-Wee, Kelly Burkel, Aiden Heeres, Ren Kosiorowski, Hannah Kryzhan, Michael Russell, Sophia Severance, Nathaniel Steever, Lauren Streng, Ross Towbin, Eliza Vassalo & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Costumes **Sammer Ali, Katy Dawson, Aspen Kinomoto, Maya Liu, Rachel Pfeil, Esmay Pricejones, Kayti Sanchez, Ellie Van Engen, Emily Weddle & Theatre 250/252/262 students**

Production Office **Shelby Holloway, Esther Hwang**

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---

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# **M** | MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

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# M | MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

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# **THEATRE & DRAMA ALUMNI**

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- Jessie Balaka** (2018) Entertainment Tech/Rigger, Walt Disney World
- Lindsay Balaka** (2016) Artist/Illustrator, Costume Design & Development, Walt Disney Imagineering
- Briana Barker** (2023) Production Assistant, Regional Premiere of Disney's *Frozen*, as well as *Anastasia*, *Jersey Boys*, and *A Christmas Carol*
- Nick Carroll** (2022) Production Coordinator, InVision Communications
- Paul Collins** (1996) Associate Professor in Theatre Scenic and Lighting Design, Central Michigan University
- Heidi Denick** (2000) Project Manager/Interiors Experience, Nationwide Children's Hospital
- Becca Rothman Eldredge** (2011) Chief Programs Officer, The Loveland Center
- Bess Frankel** (2014) Freelance Director, Playwright
- Alaina Galasso** (2020) Paint Supervisor, Zero Productions
- Emily Hanlon** (2022) Assistant Stage Manager, Million Dollar Quartet
- Elana Lantry** (2015) Associate Director, WIZO
- Andrew Lott** (2013) Director, Global Production Design & Creative Services, Peloton
- Shawn McCulloch** (2011) Assistant Costume Designer, *The Equalizer* (Seasons 4 & 5)
- Justin Muse** (2021) Scenic Designer, *Radium Girls*, *Parade*
- Sophie Raymer** (2019) Entertainment Costuming for Parades, Walt Disney Company, Disneyland
- Chris Simko** (2019) Lighting Systems Engineer, FIRST Agency
- Kelsey Socha-Bishop** (2014) Accounts & Project Lead, Born Digital, Inc.
- Michayla Van Treeck** (2017) Wardrobe Supervisor, *Dragon Lady*
- Samantha Weiser** (2020) Lighting Designer, *Jekyll & Hyde*

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Friends of Theatre & Drama supports the SMTD Department of Theatre & Drama by providing vital discretionary support for scholarship funding to attract the most talented prospective students to the University of Michigan. Additionally, Friends' support brings visiting artists, guest directors, agents, and other industry insiders to Ann Arbor to work with students and creates performance opportunities our students need to succeed in the competitive world of theatre, film, and television.

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# M | MUSIC, THEATRE & DANCE

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# SMTD FALL 2024 EVENTS

## University Symphony Orchestra

9/13 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## University Philharmonia Orchestra

9/19 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Symphony Band

9/24 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

### ★ Julius Caesar

9/26-10/6 | Arthur Miller Theatre  
*The Department of Theatre & Drama*

## Chamber Choir

10/4 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## University Symphony Orchestra

10/6 | 7:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Concert Band

10/9 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Jazz Ensemble

10/10 | 8:00pm | Rackham Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Orpheus Singers

10/10 | 8:00pm | Stamps Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

### ★ Twelfth Night (A Musical Adaptation)

10/10-10/13 | Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre  
*The Department of Musical Theatre*

## Jazz Lab Ensemble

10/17 | 8:00pm | Rackham Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## University Philharmonia Orchestra

10/17 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## University Choir

10/22 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

### ★ Halloween Concert

10/27 | 4:00pm | Hill Auditorium

## Symphony Band

10/30 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Concert Band Chamber Winds

11/1 | 8:00pm | Hankinson Rehearsal Hall | [FREE!](#)

### ★ Band-O-Rama

11/3 | 4:00pm | Hill Auditorium

### ★ Men's Glee Club Fall Concert

11/9 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium

## Creative Arts Orchestra

11/14 | 8:00pm | Hankinson Rehearsal Hall | [FREE!](#)

### ★ Hänsel und Gretel

11/14-11/17 | Power Center  
*The Department of Voice & Opera*

## University Symphony Orchestra

11/15 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

### ★ Women's Glee Club Fall Concert

11/16 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium

## University Philharmonia Orchestra

11/19 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Chamber Choir & University Choir

11/21 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

### ★ John Proctor Is the Villain

11/21-11/24 | Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre  
*The Department of Theatre & Drama*

## Symphony Band

11/22 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Orpheus Singers

11/24 | 7:00pm | Stamps Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Concert Band

11/25 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Lab Ensemble

12/5 | 8:00pm | Rackham Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## University Symphony Orchestra

12/9 | 8:00pm | Hill Auditorium | [FREE!](#)

## Bring a Group!

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