

THEATRE JACKSONVILLE'S
Classic in San Marco



THE LION IN WINTER

BY JAMES GOLDMAN

Sponsor



Directed by
Jeff Grove

"A work of intelligence, astringent wit, and much theatrical skill." —The New York Times

September 19–October 4, 2026



By Kelli Frost-Allred

Long before the term “dysfunctional” was commonly applied to families, James Goldman gave the world a glimpse of this age-old phenomenon by creating for the stage the members of England’s original Plantaganet family: King Henry II, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and their sons. Although best known for this play, *The Lion in Winter*, and the screenplay for the resultant movie, Goldman was a prolific writer who based many of his novels, plays, and screenplays on history, a subject he dearly loved.

Goldman’s written corpus is evidence of this fascination with history. Russian history studies led him to write about Tolstoy, Czar Nicholas, and Anna Karenina. But his specialty seems to have been English history, with twelfth century ruler Henry II as the central character in *The Lion in Winter*, and he used thirteenth-century King John as the subject of his novel *Myself as Witness* and in the film *Robin and Marian*. “I read about the things they did, I studied them and then imagined what they felt and thought and said and wanted from their lives. What they were really like, of course, no one will ever know,” wrote James Goldman in his preface to *The Lion in Winter*. In 1980 he wrote, “The truth of things is always underneath. It has to be imagined.”

Audience members mustn’t be misled into thinking that *The Lion in Winter* is a drama. “He understood what comedy was about,” said his agent and wife of twenty-seven years, Barbara Goldman, in an interview with the Utah Shakespeare Festival. “*The Lion in Winter* could have been a tragedy as easily as a comedy. And it has to do with his point of view of the world. He viewed himself as a comedic writer. I think his sense of humor was everything about him.”

“Does it matter what comes after us?” Eleanor asked in the play. It mattered terribly to Eleanor, but not to James Goldman. His outlook on life prevented him from worrying enough about such mortal trivia to bother answering his own question. And while King Henry may have said “My life, when it is written, will read better than it lived,” the man who invented these words for Henry did not share his zeitgeist.

“Jim was not a man who would have taken something and been pompous about it,” Mrs. Goldman said. His Oscar sits “somewhere on a bookshelf” in the Goldman home.

Goldman wrote every day, seven days a week. “He did not write on a computer; he would only write using an IBM Selectric— you know, the kind with the golf ball,” Mrs. Goldman attested. “Jim called his typewriter ‘Big Jack’ in honor of his favorite golfer, Jack Nicklaus.”

James Goldman was born in Chicago on June 30, 1927. Four years later, his brother William (author and screenwriter of *The Princess Bride*) was born into the family. The two brothers would remain close, and eventually both became writers. In fact, the two wrote collaboratively for film, television, and theatre (*A Family Affair*, *Stanley Poole*). Both received Academy Awards for their screenwriting, but at separate times for separate films: James won for *The Lion in Winter* (1969) while William won for *Butch Cassidy and*

the Sundance Kid (1970) and *All the President’s Men* (1977). James collaborated with Stephen Sondheim on *Evening Primrose* (1966) and on *Follies* (1971). Goldman began writing *Follies* in 1965 as a murder mystery, but eventually took it to Broadway and won the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical (1971). The 1987 London revival of *Follies* garnered the Olivier Award for the year’s best musical.

After earning an undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago, Goldman was drafted and served in the U.S. Army. He later attended Columbia University in New York City, where he studied musicology, but eventually decided that writing would be his career. He married Barbara Goldman, a producer, in 1971. A very private family, the Goldmans seldom socialized with business associates in the entertainment field, in spite of the fact that James worked with such Broadway heavyweights as Emanuel “Manny” Azenberg, Harold Prince, and Stephen Sondheim.

Hollywood has transformed many theatre scripts into huge film successes, and although *The Lion in Winter* is among those plays, it remains a classic of modern theatre as well. Goldman wrote that “*The Lion in Winter* was more than reprieved by the movie. It was transformed into a theatre work that has been performed all over the world.” The original stage cast included Robert Preston as Henry II, Rosemary Harris as Eleanor of Aquitaine, and Christopher Walken as France’s Philip Capet. The film version of *The Lion in Winter* marked milestones in several careers: Goldman’s first and only Academy Award (for his screenplay adaptation) as well as a Golden Globe nomination; Katharine Hepburn’s third of four best actress Oscars; an Oscar nomination and Golden Globe Award for Peter O’Toole (best actor); the New York Film Critics Circle Award for Best Film of 1968; Anthony Hopkins’s film debut playing Henry’s son, Prince Richard; and Timothy Dalton’s film debut as Prince Philip.

Goldman distinguished himself as a writer in several genres, including novels (*Myself as Witness*, *Waldorf*, *The Man from Greek and Roman*, *Fulton County*), short stories (*White Nights*), theatre (*The Lion in Winter*; *They Might Be Giants*; *Blood, Sweat, and Stanley Poole*), television (*Anastasia: The Mystery of Anna*), film (*The Lion in Winter*, *Nicholas and Alexandra*, *Robin and Marian*, *White Nights*), and musical theater (*Follies*, *Evening Primrose*). At the time of his death, Goldman had just completed the script for a musical based on the novel *Tom Jones*, which is currently being planned for production.

Through the voice of an aging queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Goldman asks: “For the love of God, can’t we love one another just a little? That’s how peace begins. We have so much to love each other for. We have such possibilities, my children; we could change the world.”

James Goldman died unexpectedly on October 28, 1998, after suffering a heart attack. Goldman did not leave us with an account of his life. The narrative that was his life has yet to be told, but his legacy is left to us in words.



THE LION IN WINTER





THE LION IN WINTER

BY JAMES GOLDMAN

Sponsor



Directed by **Jeff Grove**

Cast

QUEEN ELEANOR Rebeque Destro
KING HENRY II Kenny Logsdon
PRINCE JOHN Collin Galvin
PRINCE GEOFFREY Eli Bruce Durham

PRINCE RICHARD Dustin Ponder
ALAIS CAPET Sydney Wissinger
KING PHILIP II Aidan Wood

Time & Place: Henry's Castle in Chinon, France, Christmas, 1183

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

*THE LION IN WINTER is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals,
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. (www.concordtheatricals.com/)*

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Technical Production Team

Director Jeff Grove
Production Manager Michelle Leigh
Fight Coordinator Ron Shreve
Lighting Design Johnny Pettegrew
Sound Design Brent Mulberry
Costume Design Classic Costumes

Graphic Design Green Onion Creative LLC
Stage Manager Katie Cress
Assistant Stage Manager Margie Ricke
Light Board Operator Mark Rubens
Sound Board Operator Aspen Krill
Wardrobe/Running Crew Lourdes Acosta

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'It is Christmas 1183 in King Henry II of England's palace in Chinon, France. Henry is discussing with his mistress, Alais, the upcoming day's events. Henry's family will be gathering for the holiday—his wife Eleanor, whom Henry has let out of prison for the occasion, and their three sons, Richard, Geoffrey, and John. Of course, much of the conversation and thought will center around Henry's successor to the throne. Henry makes it clear that he wants the youngest son, John, to be the next king, while Eleanor wants the oldest, Richard. Henry has also promised the young Prince of France, Philip, that Alais, Philip's sister, will marry Richard but he also promises Alais she can remain his mistress.

In another room the three sons are already gibing about who will be king, soon joined by their mother, and then by Henry and Alais. Henry then turns the discussion to the matter on everyone's mind: "Well—what shall we hang? The holly or each other?" Richard insists that he become king because he is the oldest and the most capable. John is sure he will inherit the throne because he is his father's choice. And Geoffrey, the middle son, feels unappreciated, with no chance at all of the throne. Then the sons and Alais depart, leaving Henry and Eleanor alone.

Much of the remainder of the play is filled with the duplicitous machinations of the various members of the family. At various times Henry courts each son, hoping to advance his agenda through lies and manipulation. Eleanor does the same. At times it is difficult to tell who wants what and what is the truth.

The three sons do the same thing, pairing up with each other in various combinations, hoping to get the help of the others. John and Geoffrey at one point even plan a war, with King Philip's help, to overthrow the plans of Richard and Eleanor and take the kingdom from Henry. At another juncture, Henry insists that Eleanor sign papers giving the Aquitaine, a valuable piece of land in France, to John, virtually guaranteeing his ascension to the throne. Eleanor, however, rebuffs his requests, and the two, once again, are at a stalemate. At one time, even Geoffrey tries to make an alliance with Philip, in his own grab for the throne.

Finally, Henry concocts one final scheme. He has his three sons locked in the wine cellar and plans to send Eleanor back to prison. Then he will go to Rome, force the pope to annul their wedding, and marry Alais.

She can then give him more sons, including a new king. Alais says, however, she can't marry him if the sons are left alive and a danger to her in the future; but Henry refuses to kill his offspring. Eleanor takes daggers to the boys in the dungeon, urging them to run, perhaps killing their father. However, they can't act either, unwilling to harm their father.

In the end, everything is as it was in the beginning. Eleanor is headed back to prison, the three princes are still squabbling over who shall be king, Alais is caught in the middle, and Henry still has no clear successor.

By Ace Pilkington

"Is it true?" That's one of the first questions audience members ask about a historical play such as *The Lion in Winter*...the answer, of course, is, "yes, no, and maybe."

James Goldman said, "This play, while simplifying the political maneuvering—and combining a meeting of the French and English Kings in 1183 with a Royal Court held at Windsor the following year into a Christmas Court that never was—is based on available data" (*The Lion in Winter* [New York: Penguin Books, 1983], ix). He admits that he got John wrong, that his dissatisfaction is rather like "what biographers must feel at having missed the . . . essence of their subject" (vi). For the others, he feels he has reached that essence, arguing that the depths of fiction are often more revealing than surface facts: "The truth of things is always underneath. It has to be imagined" (vii).

The big picture Goldman paints of a family at war with itself and its neighbors is not in doubt. The constant fight was as much a family heritage as the lands about which they fought. The Angevins (from Anjou their ancestral province; Plantagenet, a popular nickname centuries later, refers to early family members who stuck sprigs of broom in their caps) were a superbly capable, astonishingly irascible bunch. They believed they were descended from the devil, and most people who got in their way agreed. Henry II's sons repeated what Abb, Bernard said about their father as an infant, "From the devil he came; to the devil he will go" (Amy Kelly, *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings* [Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1950], 170).

Henry II's father, Count Geoffrey of Anjou (Henry also had a brother and a son named Geoffrey.), finding himself in a dispute about whether he or the canons of the bishopric of Seez should select the next bishop, had the canons and their bishop-elect castrated (Alfred Duggan, *Devil's Brood* [New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1957], 10). Following her divorce from King Louis VII of France, Eleanor, who probably already had an understanding with Henry, was ambushed by "Geoffrey of Anjou (aged sixteen), the enterprising younger brother of Henry who. . . plotted brigand-wise to possess himself of her person and her fiefs" (Kelly 80). Eleanor's escort defeated him, but he was a faithful harbinger of the family feuds to come. Such squabbles were, as Goldman shows, continued in the next generation. Henry barely survived the revolt by his wife and sons for which he imprisoned Eleanor, but as Philip Warner says, his "personal troubles were not over, and never would be. When not jealous of their father, his restless sons were jealous of each other" (*Sieges of the Middle Ages* [New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1968], 116).

The Lion in Winter's portrait of these family rivalries is essentially correct. Goldman has Richard say, "I'm not a second son. Not now. Your Henry's in the vault, you know" (49).



"Of all his sons Henry loved this eldest one [who died before the opening of the play] with special predilection" (Kelly 171), and Richard was painfully jealous. With the death of young Henry John became his father's favorite (Richard Barber, *The Devil's Crown* [Pennsylvania: Combined Books, 1997], 67), and Richard had yet more to resent. Part of the trouble between Henry and Richard was, as Goldman shows, that Eleanor preferred Richard (Kelly 173).

Goldman's characterizations are also basically accurate. Richard was as ruthless and Geoffrey as deceptive as the play suggests. Richard, in Amy Kelly's words, "took the fortresses of his enemies, razed their castles, burned their towns, uprooted their orchards and vineyards, sowed their fields with salt, ordered the hands of his captives cut off and their eyes gouged out, and dishonored the women of his hostages with a very sovereign severity" (195). And Geoffrey was even more brilliantly devious in real life than he is in the play, with, Kelly says, "an extraordinary ingenuity in intrigue and a persuasiveness that few could resist even when they knew they could not rely upon his plans or promises." She continues with what might almost be a summary of one of Goldman's scenes: "Confronted with his own crookedness, he was shameless, crafty, full of excuses" (174).

Goldman's Eleanor and Henry are also much like their historical originals. Eleanor herself was brilliant, charming, much concerned with growing old (Marion Meade, *Eleanor of Aquitaine: A Biography* [New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1977], 247), and an enormously troublesome wife. Her first husband, Louis VII, when he and Eleanor were on crusade and she demanded a divorce, also found it necessary to hold her captive (Kelly 60-2), and Henry considered a variety of options for dealing with her, including divorcing her and then imprisoning her in a nunnery (Kelly 190). Henry had most of the good and bad traits of the Angevins: ferocious energy, a fierce temper, an appetite for mistresses, and impatience with the powerful (Warner 116). He also had other qualities.

Goldman claims for him, a preference for peace over war and a genius for making just laws and good government (Kelly 203-04). However, not all of Goldman's materials are equally reliable. The rumor that Eleanor had had a sexual relationship with Henry II's father, Count Geoffrey the Handsome (so called for his appearance, not his behavior), is probably

untrue (Desmond Seward, *Eleanor of Aquitaine: The Mother Queen* [New York: Dorset Press, 1978], 60). Much more likely is the affair between Alais and Henry and Henry's plan to start a new family while disinheriting the old one (Kelly 192-3). Perhaps the most misleading use of rumor in the play is the suggestion that Philip and Richard had a homosexual relationship. Both Anthony Bridge (*Richard the Lionheart* [New York: M. Evans & Company, Inc., 1989], 141) and John Gillingham (*Richard the Lionheart* [New York: Times Books, 1978], 161-2) cite rumors that suggest Richard was an extremely active heterosexual.

Perhaps a more serious issue than choosing which rumors to believe is what Goldman calls "simplifying the political maneuvering." He has deliberately distorted Henry II's goals for and attitudes about his empire. In all probability, he was not trying to secure the crown of England for John but to put Richard in the position of eldest son following young Henry's death. Since Richard was now to receive his father's lands of England and Normandy, his mother's property—Aquitaine—should go to John, who, at that point, had nothing. Richard was distrustful and understandably reluctant to trade actual rule of "the richest province on the Continent" (Goldman 43), where he felt at home, for a promise of power in the alien north. Henry's policy of trying to give each of his three sons something while simultaneously trying to deprive the most warlike and dangerous of them of his power base makes excellent sense, as does Richard's resistance (Richard Barber, *Henry Plantagenet, 1133-1189* [New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1964], 212-13).

Ultimately, though, all plays, historical or not, must be judged not according to how accurately they have employed facts but how profoundly they have explored truths. In her director's notes, Kathleen E. Conlin says *The Lion in Winter* is "about the demotion of royalty into the messy, psychological passions of human frailties and human families." Goldman has his Henry tell us that he has much in common with King Lear, another king demoted to the status of troubled father. However, in the end these plays about families must also be capable of raising their characters to transcendent heights—beyond the vicissitudes of family and royalty to central truths about humanity. Shakespeare's King Lear, of course, does so. Has James Goldman also succeeded? That is a question, not for a historian, but for a theatre audience.

READ MORE ABOUT IT!

Want more information? Explore the following resources!

BOOKS

The Demon's Brood: A History of the Plantagenet Dynasty
by Desmond Seward

Exploring English Castles
by Edd Morris

Eleanor of Aquitaine: The Mother Queen of the Middle Ages
by Desmond Seward

Kings & Queens of Great Britain
by David Soud

Not in Front of the Corgis: Secrets of Life Behind the Royal Curtains
by Brian Hoey

The Rough Guide to the Royals
by Alice Hunt

FILMS

The Lion in Winter; The Royals

E-MEDIA

Clash of Crowns: William the Conqueror, Richard Lionheart and Eleanor of Aquitaine by Mary McAuliffe

Leo Tolstoy opened his novel *Anna Karenina* with the line, "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Those opposing statements seem to assume that families are either happy or unhappy – one or the other. Following a domestic blow-up in *The Lion in Winter*, Eleanor of Aquitaine takes a more nuanced approach: "What family doesn't have its ups and downs?"

The professor who taught my college Play Analysis class opined that every indisputably great American play is somehow or other about the family. Certainly, *The Lion in Winter* seems to fit the definition, as it portrays the squabbling of King Henry II of England and his queen, Eleanor, over which of their surviving sons will inherit Henry's throne and empire.

At first it may seem odd that this story of a British power struggle is, in fact, an American play, but James Goldman's script first saw the stage on Broadway in 1966. What feels odder to us today is that the play flopped, running just three months, despite a cast including Robert Preston, Rosemary Harris (who won a Tony Award for her performance), and even a young Christopher Walken. It was only after the release of the Academy Award-winning film version starring Peter O'Toole and Katharine Hepburn

that the play began to appear regularly on the world's stages.

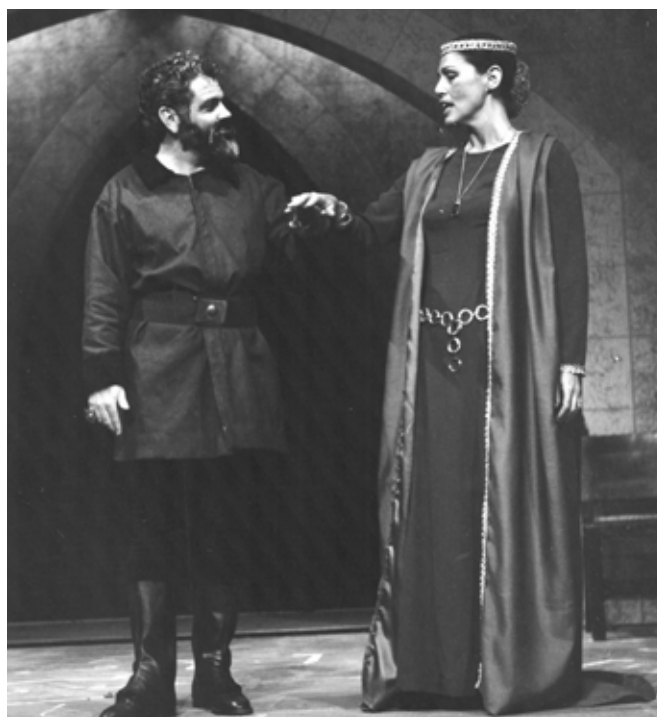
The Lion in Winter may not have had an auspicious start, and it may not be as old as Shakespeare's *Henry V* or Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, but it fully merits its place as this year's Theatre Jacksonville Classic in San Marco. More than a dozen productions are scheduled to light up theatres in the U.S. and the U.K. in just the next few months. It directly inspired the Fox television series *Empire* and has been compared to HBO series as different as *Game of Thrones* and *Succession* – but the Lion got there first.

More importantly, the play dissects a family at war with itself over issues of power and control, giving us a cautionary tale of what we shouldn't want our families to be – and it does it with an effervescent wit that in one scene approaches the genre of bedroom farce, albeit with deadly serious consequences.

The Theatre Jacksonville company of *The Lion in Winter* hopes that this classic tale will inform you, surprise you, and – most of all – entertain you. Thank you for joining us!

— Jeff Grove

1970 Production



Learn about upcoming auditions:
TheatreJax.com/Auditions

Company Bios

KATIE CRESS (Stage Manager) is thrilled to be back behind the stage to help bring such an incredible script to life. You may have seen her working on other productions such as *Play On!* (TJ), *Packing Up Polly* (TJ), *Puffs* (5&Dime), *A Doll's House* (TJ), and many more. Katie would like to thank Jeff for inspiring her all those years ago to pursue theatre and bringing her to where she is today. She would also like to thank her husband, Adam, for his endless support.

REBEQUE DESTRO (Queen Eleanor) After a long hiatus, Rebeque is delighted to return to the stage in such a prestigious role! Many thanks to Theatre Jacksonville for the opportunity and always, my rock and reason, my son Taylor. I love you, Chunk! Rebeque has a long relationship with the stage and has performed with communities, universities and professionally throughout the US. Previous favorite roles include Hannah Jarvis in *Arcadia* (Theater Iowa), Reagan in *King Lear* (Ad Hoc Theater, Denver), Maggie in *A Chorus Line* (Touring US).

ELI BRUCE DURHAM (Prince Geoffrey) is thankful for Theatre Jacksonville and says "hi!" to Ivy!

COLLIN GALVIN (Prince John) is excited to be performing as John of England in *The Lion in Winter*. He has enjoyed performing on stage in a variety of productions, including *Alice in Wonderland*, in which he played the Mock Turtle, and other theater productions with Alhambra Theatre & Dining. In addition to acting, Collin is an accomplished young musician. He plays flute, piccolo, and piano, and enjoys performing with the Jacksonville Symphony Youth Orchestra. He is especially grateful for every opportunity to combine his love of music and theater. Collin would like to thank his family, directors, castmates, and everyone who continues to support his love of performing. He hopes you enjoy the show!

JEFF GROVE (Director) is staging his second Theatre Jacksonville production, following his work on *The Women of Lockerbie*. He has performed with TJ many times, in shows as diverse as *Gypsy*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Les Misérables*, *The Explorer's Club*, and the recent concert performances of *Mame* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. While earning his bachelor's and master's degrees in English education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Jeff studied both theatrical and operatic stage direction. He teaches theatre and chairs the Aesthetics Department at Stanton College Preparatory School. In that capacity, he has directed many shows, taking in world classics, modern drama, comedy, and musicals. With Chris Sheppard, he co-authored and published seven one-act plays, which have accrued 551 productions in 43 U.S. states and five Canadian provinces, as well as the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, Italy, the United Arab Emirates, and Taiwan.

KENNY LOGSDON (King Henry II) played Henry/Lord Dudley in the spring; I fooled you, didn't I? God, but I do love being King. Shout out to my blood family for the DNA; shout out to the magnificent cast, director, and crew; shout out to my family of friends that would help me move the ____; and shout out to my Springfield family for the love and support. I like my steaks cooked medium-rare and my bourbon with one cube.

DUSTIN PONDER (Prince Richard) is thrilled to make his acting debut at Theatre Jacksonville! He attended the University of Florida, where he studied literature, writing and poetry. Offstage, Dustin is a proud member of Teamsters Local 512, a longtime union activist, and a passionate advocate for workers' rights. He recently co-founded The Jax Film Club and harbors a deep passion for cinema. Dustin would like to thank Jeff for this opportunity, as well as for his tutelage, support, and guidance in opening the world of theater to him. He also extends his immense gratitude to the cast and crew for their support, passion, and talent. He would like to thank his dear friend Squirrel Pitts for introducing him to the Theatre Jacksonville family and encouraging him to audition. Finally, Dustin would like to thank his mother, Diane, for her love, support, and encouragement.

MARGIE RICKE (Assistant Stage Manager) is a retired ELA and Theater teacher originally from Miami. She has directed countless high school plays from *Antigone* to *Beauty and the Beast* and acted in local community and professional theater in Miami including as Nurse Ratched in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and Dolly in *Bad Habits*. She is grateful for the warm welcome from Katie, Jeff and the cast and hopes this is the first of many Theatre Jacksonville shows in her future.

SYDNEY WISSINGER (Alais Capet) is thrilled to be making her Theatre Jacksonville debut! Sydney is a middle school theatre and choir director who spends her time investing in her local performing arts community. As a performing arts educator, Sydney believes in empowering her students to discover their voices and become their most authentic selves. When not at school, Sydney enjoys finding time to perform onstage herself. Recent roles include Margaret in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Maria in *The Sound of Music*, Miss Andrew in *Mary Poppins*, and ensemble in the Northeast Florida premiere of *Waitress*. Sydney would like to thank her theatre family for their endless support and her own students who inspire her every day.

AIDAN WOOD (King Philip II) is overjoyed to be cast among people with such energy and verve, and I am glad to have made even more friends with whom I can share a love for theatre. I'd like to thank my teacher, Mrs. Deccico, for her enthused encouragement and my mother for her unwavering love and support.

A THRIVING CREATIVE ECONOMY ENHANCES THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR US ALL. SUPPORTED IN PART BY FLORIDA ARTS & CULTURE AND THE MERIT-BASED CULTURAL SERVICE GRANT PROGRAM, ADMINISTERED BY THE CULTURAL COUNCIL OF GREATER JACKSONVILLE WITH FUNDING FROM THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE AND OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS, WE EXTEND OUR GRATITUDE TO ALL PARTNERS WHO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE.



THEATRE JACKSONVILLE'S
Classic in San Marco

THE LION IN WINTER



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2026-2027

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*Matinee performances
are at 2pm.

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showtime.



The Classic in San Marco: (included for All-Access Members)

The Lion in Winter

by James Goldman

September 19, 20*, 24, 25, 26, 27,* October 1, 2, 3*, 4*, 2026

Winner! Three 2023 Drama Desk Awards

Sibling rivalry, adultery, and dungeons – *The Lion in Winter* is a modern-day classic. Comedic in tone, dramatic in action – the play tells the story of the Plantagenet family, who are locked in a free-for-all of competing ambitions to inherit a kingdom. The queen, and wealthiest woman in the world, Eleanor of Aquitaine, has been kept in prison since raising an army against her husband, King Henry II. Let out only for holidays, the play centers around the inner conflicts of the royal family as they fight over both a kingdom and King Henry's paramour during the Christmas of 1183. As Eleanor says, "Every family has its ups and downs," and this royal family is no exception.

"A work of intelligence, astringent wit, and much theatrical skill." – *The New York Times*

The Mainstage Season: (included for All-Access Members & Subscribers)

Come From Away

Book, Music and Lyrics by Irene Sankoff and David Hein

November 7, 8*, 12, 13, 14, 15*, 19, 20, 21*, 22*, 2026

2017 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Musical
2019 Olivier Award for Best New Musical

Based on the true story of the time when the isolated community of Gander, Newfoundland, played host to the world. What started as an average day in a small town turned into an international sleeper, when 38 planes, carrying thousands of people from around the globe, were diverted to Gander's airstrip on September 11, 2001. Undaunted by culture clashes and language barriers, the people of Gander cheered the stranded travelers with music, an open bar and the recognition that we're all part of a global family.

"A flight from our troubles into total joy." – *The Times*

The 39 Steps

Adapted by Patrick Barlow

From the novel by John Buchan

January 16, 17*, 21, 22, 23, 24*, 28, 29, 30*, 31*, 2027

In this Tony Award winning hit comedy, a man with a boring life meets a woman with a thick accent who says she's a spy. When he takes her home, she is murdered. Soon, a mysterious organization called "The 39 Steps" is hot on the man's trail in a nationwide manhunt that climaxes in a death-defying finale! A riotous blend of virtuoso performances and wildly inventive stagecraft, *The 39 Steps* amounts to an unforgettable evening of pure pleasure!

"Ingenious! A dizzy delight!" – *Daily News*

Crimes of the Heart

By Beth Henley

February 27, 28*, March 4, 5, 6, 7*, 11, 12, 13*, 14*, 2027

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize

In Hazlehurst, Mississippi, the three Magrath sisters gather to await news of their grandfather, who is living out his last hours in the local hospital. Lenny, the oldest sister, is unmarried at 30 and facing diminishing marital prospects; Meg, the middle sister, who quickly outgrew Hazlehurst, is back after a failed singing career on the West Coast, and Babe, the youngest, is out on bail after having shot her husband in the stomach. Their troubles, grave yet somehow hilarious, are highlighted by their priggish cousin, Chick, and by Babe's awkward young lawyer, who has clearly fallen in love with her.

"overflows with infectious high spirits." – *The New York Times*

Theatre People, or The Angel Next Door

By Paul Slade Smith

April 17, 18*, 22, 23, 24, 25*, 29, 30, May 1*, 2*, 2027

In this rollicking comedy, young Oliver Adams is on the brink of a major success. His novel *The Angel Next Door* is set to be published, and famed Broadway playwrights (and married couple) Charlotte and Arthur Sanders have already adapted his book for what is sure to be a huge stage hit. Their leading lady, Margot Bell, is, of course, the very person Oliver adores and about whom he has written his novel (unbeknownst to her). When they all converge for a weekend in Newport, Rhode Island, the thin walls of the well-appointed mansion reveal that the angel may not be angelic, and only the power of theatre can save the play, Oliver's novel and perhaps most importantly, his heart.

"a glittering, effervescent hit romantic comedy" – *Broadway World*

Nunsense

Book, Music and Lyrics by Dan Goggin

June 12, 13*, 17, 18, 19, 20*, 24, 25, 26*, 27*, 2027

Winner! Outer Critics Circle Awards for
Best Book, Music and Off-Broadway Musical

Nunsense is habit-forming! This zany, wholesome, and hilarious musical revue is a fundraiser put on by the Little Sisters of Hoboken to raise money to bury sisters accidentally poisoned by the convent cook, Sister Julia (Child of God). This madcap musical premiered off-Broadway in 1985 and is still a hit to this day.

"A hail of fun and frolic! Wacky and outrageous" – *The New York Times*



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