

The Laramie Project

The Laramie Project opens in TWO WEEKS!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5th 2025

Lakewood Playhouse's production of **The Laramie Project** by Moisés Kaufman and the members of Tectonic Theater Project opens in TWO WEEKS!

In honoring the memory and legacy of Matthew Shepard, this production of *The Laramie Project* strives to inspire our community to see themselves in the citizens of Laramie and reflect on their own reaction to recent attacks on the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, locally and nationally. This moment is an opportunity to connect, comfort and organize in this troubling time and to honor the mission of the Matthew Shepard Foundation to amplify the story of Matthew Shepard to "inspire individuals, organizations, and communities to embrace the dignity and equality of all people. Through local, regional, and national outreach, we empower individuals to find their voice to create change and challenge communities to identify and address hate that lives within our schools, neighborhoods, and homes."

With a cast composed of local actors, this production will bring a whole new perspective on the work by putting community at the center of the storytelling and offering space for conversation and reflection. What can we learn about ourselves by examining the words and actions of another community?

*"...this emotionally searing production asks us
to listen to the citizens of Laramie and see ourselves."*

The Laramie Project is a breathtaking theatrical collage that explores the complexity of identity and the human experience through the lens and voices of a community in crisis. The piece invites us to see ourselves in the fullness of our individual humanity and as a member of a larger community, and tempers an honest look at a horrific crime with the coming together of a community to say "Hate is not a Laramie value."

In October 1998, a twenty-one-year-old student at the University of Wyoming was kidnapped, severely beaten and left to die, tied to a fence in the middle of the prairie outside Laramie, Wyoming. His bloody, bruised and battered body was not discovered until the next day, and he

died several days later in an area hospital. His name was Matthew Shepard, and he was the victim of this assault because he was gay.

Moisés Kaufman and fellow members of the Tectonic Theater Project made six trips to Laramie over the course of a year and a half in the aftermath of the beating and during the trial of the two young men accused of killing Shepard. They conducted more than 200 interviews with the people of the town and the breadth of reaction to the crime is fascinating. Kaufman and Tectonic Theater members have constructed a deeply moving theatrical event from these interviews and their own experiences.

The incredible cast features **Darryin B. Cunningham, Zack Fowler, Mykahla George, Ty Halton, Aya Hashiguchi, Brookelyne Peterson, Jason Sharp, Stefanie Van Rafelghem** with understudies **Brad Alemao, Marie Tjernlund** and **Kaelynn Miller**.

The Laramie Project is directed by **Joseph C. Walsh**, assistant directed by **Courtnee Ramos**, lighting design by **Elijah Bellis**, costume design and properties design by **Madeleine Arnold**, and the scenic artist is **Ashley Roy-Simpson**. The stage manager is **Maisha Rice** and the assistant stage manager is **Stephanie Huber**.

The Laramie Project runs from February 21-March 9, 2025, with performances on Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30pm, and Sunday matinees at 2:00pm. Our pay what you can and industry night is Sunday, March 2nd at 7:30pm.

Call the Box Office at (253) 588-0042 or visit www.lakewoodplayhouse.org to book online.

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By Moisés Kaufman and the members of Tectonic Theater Project

LAKESWOOD PLAYHOUSE

Lakewood Playhouse's mission is to build community through theatre. Our 175 seat theatre performs shows in-the-round in the Seattle/Tacoma metropolitan area in the Lakewood Towne Center.

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