

# CLASSICAL · ACTORS · ENSEMBLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS IMAGE (available mid-Feb.): [classicalactorsensemble.org/press.htm](http://classicalactorsensemble.org/press.htm)

## **Classical Actors Ensemble Presents *The Roaring Girl***

**March 2 - 18 at Gremlin Theatre in Saint Paul**

(Minneapolis, MN)—Classical Actors Ensemble (CAE), the Twin Cities' theater company exclusively dedicated to English Renaissance drama, will premiere *The Roaring Girl* to Twin Cities audiences. Written by Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker circa 1611 and directed by Joseph Papke, *The Roaring Girl* is a rarely performed comedy featuring a unique, resolute female protagonist who defies the social mores of her time, played by Meredith Kind. Performances run March 2 - 18 at Gremlin Theatre. Tickets are name-your-price, \$16 – 40, and can be purchased at the door or at [classicalactorsensemble.org](http://classicalactorsensemble.org).

A play more often taught than performed, *The Roaring Girl* is a city comedy: a realistic and often satirical genre with dramatic situations concerning everyday citizens in London as opposed to tales of royalty or exotic lands. The "roaring girl" of the title is Moll Cutpurse, a contrarian who defies gender roles of her day by wearing men's clothing, smoking, fighting, and leading an independent life. She's based on Mary Frith, a real life London roisterer during the early 17th Century. The term "roaring girl" is a play on "roaring boy", period slang meaning a male who engaged in noisy, riotous, drunken behavior, such a brawling or petty crimes.

As is the style for city comedies, the play presents several overlapping plotlines. Young Sebastian's father refuses to allow him to wed his love, Mary, because her dowry is too small. In recourse, Sebastian fools his father into believing he now wants to marry the disreputable Moll Cutpurse, hoping his father will see Mary as a preferable alternative. Moll coordinates to bring the young lovers together while along the way righting other wrongs, putting lascivious gallants in their place, and defending her unique persona.

*The Roaring Girl* highlights aspects of Moll that were deemed improper, while also depicting her as possessing virtue. Relevant to our current cultural examination of gender fluidity, the independent, gender-nonconforming Moll is seen as centuries ahead of her time. Producing *The Roaring Girl* now creates an opportunity to see our world reflected in early 17th century art.

"The character of Moll Cutpurse is a largely unknown, but pioneering step in the struggle for gender equality," says artistic director Joseph Papke. "Her behavior and worldview are

absolutely modern. To best highlight how revolutionary this was, we're setting our production squarely in its original time and place, Jacobean London—a first for CAE."

*The Roaring Girl* has a scant production history, with only minor professional productions in the U.S., such as Shenandoah Shakespeare's 2001 limited touring production. In the U.K. there have been two major productions, both by the Royal Shakespeare Company: in 1983 (starring Helen Mirren) and 2014.

As always, CAE incorporates elements of original period production style such as live music performed by the actors, open staging, and direct interplay with the audience. These seemingly historical touches actually further CAE's mission of making these plays contemporary popular entertainment.

### **THE ARTISTS**

The skilled cast of 19 includes CAE core company members Joe Wiener as Laxton and Randall J. Funk as Sir Alexander, along with the talents of Timothy Daly, Hugh Kirsch, Mike Tober, and Meredith Kind as the titular Moll. The production will be designed by Dietrich Poppen and directed by CAE artistic director Joseph Papke.

### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

Friday, March 2, 7:30pm Opening

Saturday, March 3, 7:30pm

Sunday, March 4, 2:00pm

Thursday, March 8, 7:30pm

Friday, March 9, 7:30pm Post show discussion

Saturday, March 10, 7:30pm

Sunday, March 11, 2:00pm

Monday, March 12, 7:30pm Pay-What-You-Can performance, tickets at door only

Thursday, March 15, 7:30pm

Friday, March 16, 7:30pm

Saturday, March 17, 7:30pm

Sunday, March 18, 2:00pm Closing

Runtime: TBA

Recommended for ages 12 and up.

### **TICKETS**

\$16 – 40. Name-your-price sliding scale.

Pay-what-you-can Monday, March 12, 7:30pm

Tickets can be purchased at the door, or at [classicalactorsensemble.org](http://classicalactorsensemble.org).

Questions may be directed to the box office at [boxoffice@classicalactorsensemble.org](mailto:boxoffice@classicalactorsensemble.org) or 651.321.4024

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

Gremlin Theatre is wheelchair accessible.

## **LOCATION**

Gremlin Theatre, 550 Vandalia Street, St Paul, MN 55114

Located in Vandalia Tower. Enter via the double doors next to Lake Monster Brewing.

Free parking is available in the lot on Wabash Avenue near the water tower.

## **ABOUT CLASSICAL ACTORS ENSEMBLE**

Classical Actors Ensemble is a Twin Cities theater company that captures the spirit in which the plays of the English Renaissance were originally performed – with immediacy, passion, and as popular entertainment. Since its founding by artistic director Joseph Papke in 2009, CAE has presented eighteen works by William Shakespeare, John Ford, Thomas Middleton, John Webster, Ben Jonson, and Christopher Marlowe. Recent productions include "As You Like It" spring 2017 at the Crane Theater as well as touring to high schools and "The Comedy of Errors" summer 2017 free in Twin Cities parks. CAE's goal is to demonstrate why these works of art are considered classics and to freshly prove their relevance in today's world.

To learn more about the company, please visit [classicalactorsensemble.org](http://classicalactorsensemble.org).

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