

The logo for Chester Theatre Company, featuring the text "CHESTER THEATRE COMPANY" in a white, serif font, centered within a solid orange square.

CHESTER  
THEATRE  
COMPANY

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## **Chester Theatre Company Announces 2017 Summer Season Set for June 28 to August 27**

**The second season under the helm of Producing Artistic Director Daniel Elihu Kramer features an American Premiere, a celebrated one-man show, and two productions staged in the round.**

Chester, MA (February 23, 2017) – **Producing Artistic Director Daniel Elihu Kramer** has announced Chester Theatre Company’s 2017 Summer Season, which will feature an American Premiere, two New England Premieres, and the return of actor Joel Ripka in a one-man performance. And, **in a first for CTC**, the second half of the season will be staged in the round.

“In my second season leading this gem of a theatre,” said **Kramer**, “I’m excited about the stories we have the privilege to tell, and the conversations our audiences and artists will share this summer. Two teenagers discovering their deepest truths in Walt Whitman; blue collar Americans facing questions of loyalty and survival; a son’s gift of hope, told in partnership with the audience; love and family made through sharing music. Four remarkable plays, told by outstanding artists, asking what do we owe each other, how can we care for each other? Chester Theatre Company is known as a place for conversations, where we celebrate the interactions between artists and audience,” Kramer continued. “Most of our performances feature post-show discussions or panels. This season, with these plays, at this divided time in our country, these conversations are more important than ever.”

The Season:

### **I and You**

Written by Lauren Gunderson

June 28 – July 9

Anthony arrives at Caroline's door bearing a battered copy of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, an assignment from their English teacher. Due tomorrow. As the two let their guards down, this seemingly straightforward poetry project unlocks a deeper mystery that has brought them together. *I and You* is an ode to youth, fate, and the strange beauty of shared humanity. Winner of the 2014 Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award, it also received a “rolling” world premiere at four regional theatres sponsored by the National New Play Network. *I and You* will be **directed by Kristen van Ginhoven**, Artistic Director of WAM Theatre, in her CTC debut.

## **Skeleton Crew**

*New England Premiere*

Written by Dominique Morisseau

July 13 – July 23

In this “deeply moral and deeply American play” (*The New York Times*), Reggie has worked his way up to supervisor at a faltering auto factory. Now he has to decide whether he owes his loyalty to himself, to his bosses, or to long-time family friend Faye and the younger workers on the line, Dez and Shanita. In the spirit of August Wilson’s Pittsburgh Cycle, this third play from Morisseau’s Detroit Trilogy explores the hard choices facing Americans barely squeezing by. It was named by *the New York Times* as “one of six plays that reckon with an anxious America.” *Skeleton Crew* received its World Premiere in 2016 at the Atlantic Theater Company in New York, and proved so popular that it was moved to a larger space for a limited Off Broadway run. **Directed by Awoye Timpo.**

## **Every Brilliant Thing**

*New England Premiere*

Written by Duncan Macmillan with Jonny Donahoe

August 2 – August 13

When a boy’s mother attempts suicide, he starts a list of everything that’s brilliant in the world to convince her to stay: things with stripes, ice cream, Christopher Walken’s hair. CTC favorite **Joel Ripka** leads the audience on an engaging journey of a son’s gift to his mother, to himself, and to the audience. A theatre experience—a life experience—to remember. First produced by Paines Plough and Pentabus Theatre Company in the UK, followed by a run at New York City’s Barrow Street Theatre, the original production was also filmed and aired on HBO in 2016. *The Guardian* calls it “Heart-wrenching, hilarious...possibly one of the funniest plays you'll ever see.” This one-man show will be **directed by Daniel Elihu Kramer**, Producing Artistic Director of Chester Theatre Company.

## **Folk**

*American Premiere*

Written by Tom Wells

August 17 – August 27

For Winnie, a Guinness-hoisting nun, and Stephen, a shy maintenance worker, Friday nights are for playing and singing. Until sixteen-year-old Kayleigh lobs a brick through Winnie’s window. These three band together into the unlikeliest of folk trios, and an equally unexpected family. **Michele Tauber** (last seen in *Pride@Prejudice*) returns in the role of Winnie. Written by one of England's most promising young playwrights, *Folk* was originally co-produced by Birmingham Rep, Watford Palace and Hull Truck. CTC is proud to present the **American Premiere** of *Folk* **under the direction of James Warwick**, staging his eighth production with the company. Mr. Warwick is a former Associate Artistic Director of Chester Theatre, and as an actor, he has appeared on Broadway and London’s West End, at many major regional theatres both in the US and the UK, and on film and television.

Talkbacks follow Thursday matinees and Saturday evening performances. Cast Conversations follow Friday matinees. Panel Discussions featuring outside experts take place after the first Sunday matinee of each play.

Additional events, complete casting and additional production information will be announced at a later date.

All performances will take place in the intimate setting of Chester's Historic Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road, Chester, MA. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and 2:00 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays. Individual ticket prices are \$37.50. Students and Chester residents may purchase \$10 day of show tickets with valid i.d. at the door or by calling the box office. Single tickets, season subscriptions, and flex passes may be purchased online at [chestertheatre.org](http://chestertheatre.org), or by phone at 413.354.7771. Special rates for groups of 10 or more are available. **Tickets go on sale at noon on Monday, February 27, 2017.**

### **About Chester Theatre Company**

Chester Theatre Company, a professional theatre company located between the Berkshires and the Pioneer Valley, and convenient to both, is known for presenting high-quality productions with top-notch actors, directors, and designers from across the country since 1990. Founded by former Artistic Director of Dublin's Abbey Theatre, Vincent Dowling, CTC is now in its 28th season, and produces four thought-provoking plays each summer in the intimate setting of the Town Hall Theatre at 15 Middlefield Road in Chester, MA.

For further information, please call CTC at 413.354.7770, or visit [www.chestertheatre.org](http://www.chestertheatre.org).

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