The year is 1950, the setting is South Africa, and the topic is race. Athol Fugard’s *Master Harold and the Boys* tells the story of a 17-year-old white boy, Hally, and his two servants, Sam and Willie, who have cared for him all his life while his alcoholic father cannot.

*Master Harold,* may be set on a different continent and a different era, but the issues it examines are as fresh today as they were when the play was written in 1982, when South Africa was still a segregated country.

“Race and diversity — it’s a big topic right now,” said director Gabe Francisco. “People are trying to find their place and where they stand.”

Francisco first encountered the script in a Lansing Community College class. It piqued his interest, as his family has roots in South Africa’s Dutch Boer community, the ruling class at the time *Master Harold* was written.

He said he identifies with Hally — whom Willie refers to as “Master Harold.”

“When we meet Hally, he’s very naïve to the world,” Francisco said. “He doesn’t know what’s going on around him.”

The play is about power and responsibility in the face of income inequality, race, and social divides in contemporary society.

For example, when flying a kite Sam made for him, Hally describes how, when they were finished, he sat on a bench and Sam walked away. Hally didn’t understand that Sam walked away because he was not allowed to sit there.

Through the course of the play, Hally begins to come to an understanding of the situation that leaves him in the position of power over two grown men who, nonetheless, serve as his role models and mentors.

*Master Harold* is appropriate for ages 16 and up due to language and the historical themes. The play still is thought-provoking, Francisco says. “This brings to light not only our struggles with civil rights, but shows how other countries were involved in it at the same time,” he said.

*Master Harold* takes the Main Stage at Riverwalk Theatre September 28-October 1 and October 5-8.

NOTE that 7 pm BARGAIN THURSDAY SHOWS have been added to the Black Box schedule this season with tickets only $10/$8 on Thursdays. Black Box is general seating; plan to arrive early for best seats.

Kathleen Lavey
Riverwalk’s new season has begun and I hope you don’t mind but I shall start at the End: the rousing ovation received by She Loves Me. The audience showed great appreciation for a cast and crew that gave their all and achieved, with great success, a show many will be talking about fondly and with enthusiasm; I certainly will.

This show has been around for quite awhile, but has an underlying fresh and sassy feel, no doubt supplied by its director Meghan Eldred-Woolsey and production crew.

This romp takes us back to Hungary in the 1930s, set in a beautiful parfumerie. But a quickly transforming set (Bob Nees) takes us to several locations and the wonderful costuming (Laura Croff) keeps us in period with clothing which is still up to the task of graceful movement all around the stage.

On to the story: Georg (Adam Woolsey) and Amalia (Kelley Lofton) find themselves in an adversarial relationship. He is a long-time employee at the shop and she is the unwanted (by him) new hire, resenting his rude treatment. Now for the twist. (Yes, it’s not a surprise to us.)

The one thing that makes both happy is receiving anonymous letters through a lonely hearts club ad. They’ve fallen for each other but only know each other as “Dear Friend.” A fun story ensues with side plot stories to round it out. BAM! A fantastic show filled with a giant catalog of catchy songs.

A great time will be had by all that attend this show. The supporting cast is stellar and the ensemble is filled with high energy people dedicated to making this a high quality show.

Adam Woolsey, was on top of his game as our hero, Georg, running the gamut of emotions, in love with a woman he “hates,” the silver voiced Kelley Lofton, soaring in the super-soprano role of Amalia. Sarah Hayner revealed in her worldly role as the unlucky-in-love Ilona, seduced and abused by the underhanded womanizer Kodaly (Alex Quinlan.) Kyle Harwood was a wry and amiable foil as Sipos. Bill Henson was a perfect Mr. Maraczek, bossy but benevolent. Isaac Orr shined as both the delightful dancing busboy and earnest, adorable Arpad, the ambitiously cheery delivery boy. This role was played in 1999 by Edric Haleen (then Spivey) who stood out in this production as the beleaguered head waiter fighting to preserve his restaurant’s romantic atmosphere.

Kudos to the singing-dancing ensemble of customers/carolers who also joined the running crew on quick set changes: Erin Biel, Laura Croff, Brian Farnham, Christine Hall, Aja Jenks, Kristin Pagels, Bob Purosky, Rachel Rayner, Jordan Taylor and Zack Whitlock. Music director John Dale Smith and A.D./Stage Manager Michele Booher-Purosky were major cogs in this entertainment machine. Also Rachel Cupples helped with choreography; Eric Chatfield did lovely scenography, James B. Brunk III did lighting, Troy Boyd and Kurt Wanamaker handled sound engineering and Lori Bailey-Smith did hair. Director Meghan also designed properties with the help of Gloria Vivalda and Marina and Morgan White-Villaneuva. The crews made it all happen. Costumes: Ashley Hampton, Chanee Houska, Anna Maier, Kris Maier; Set Construction: Leroy Cupp, Tom Ferris, Leon Green; Running Crew: Austin Elieff and Gloria Vivalda, along with the performing Ensemble.

Tim Donal & Jane Zussman
Riverwalk depends on YOUR MEMBERSHIP for over a quarter of our revenue. Be a part of the foundation that supports Riverwalk for the benefit of all theatre lovers!

NOW IS THE TIME TO JOIN OR RENEW!

Our fiscal/membership year runs from July thru June.

Actor — $15-24, Ripples, voting
Technician — $25-49, Ripples, voting, program listing
Stage Manager — $50-99, Ripples, voting, program listing, and one comp ticket
Director — $100-249, Ripples, voting, program listing, two comp tickets
Producer — $250-499, Ripples, voting, program listing, four comp tickets
Star — $500-999, Ripples, voting, program listing, six comps, name on theatre seat
Angel — $1000+, Ripples, voting, program listing, 12 comp tickets, name on a theatre seat and on the donor board in the lobby

Go to riverwalk-theatre.com. Click “more” then “get involved” to join online. Or just mail/give a check to Mike at the office. We’re 501c3 tax deductible. If you’re already a member, recruit a NEW member today!

Cast of Characters: (All aged 18+)

Jester: - (m/f) Narrator. Must interact with the audience. ie: kids.
Magician: - (m/f) Showman.
Cook: - (m/f) Very temperamental.
Empress Dit Tzi Wan: - (f) Sincere and somewhat befuddled.
Zif: - (m/f) Smart con-artist/tailor. Enthusiastic, smooth talker.
Miggot: - (m/f) Not-so-smart con artist/tailor. Equally enthusiastic. Gets it all wrong.
Emperor Vain Wan: - (m) Very vain. Obsessed with his wardrobe. Autocratic and demanding.

Ladies and/or gentlemen in waiting: Chorus, Emperor’s court, scene changers. (5 or 6 needed)

Come prepared to read from the script and sing a song. (Accompanist provided) Perusal scripts for all shows are available at the Riverwalk office - see below.

Auditions for ages 9-18: November 16-18
6:30 Thursday & Friday & 10 am Saturday
Show Dates: Feb. 9-19, 2018
Auditions are held at Hannah Community Center, 819 Abbot Road.

Produced by All-of-us Express; ages 9-18 welcome for cast and crew; OPTIONAL AUDITION WORKSHOP NOVEMBER 15; more information at cityofeastlansing.com/allofus OR e-mail ecooke@cityofeastlansing.com

Cast of Characters:

Described as a “seriocomic tragedy,” Sam Shepard’s Buried Child won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1979. Written forty years ago, its vision of relationships and Americana is timelessly relevant. When grandson Vince returns “home,” we discover that his family has been consumed by a disturbing secret from which all must emerge in order to survive. Buried Child compels us to examine our own delusions as we try to move beyond a past of nostalgia and regrets.

DODGE, in his seventies
HALIE, Dodge’s wife; mid sixties
TILDEN, their oldest son
BRADLEY, their next oldest son, an amputee
VINCIE, Tilden’s son
SHELLY, Vince’s girlfriend
FATHER DEWIS, a Protestant minister

Come prepared to read from the script.
Ethnicity Drama by Athol Fugard
Directed by Gabriel Francisco

September 28 - October 1 & October 5-8, 2017
Black Box Stage - 7 pm Thurs.; 8 pm Fri. & Sat.; 2 pm Sun.
$12 ($10 student/senior/military) BARGAIN THURSDAYS: $10 ($8)
General Seating - Reservations assure admission in case of a sellout.
517- 482-5700 or at www.riverwalktheatre.com

Playwright Athol Fugard takes us to South Africa during the apartheid era. Experience how institutionalized racism, bigotry or hatred can become absorbed by those who live under it.

September 30 DEADLINE to submit a play to DIRECT for 2018-19 Season!

Main Stage, Black Box or Renegade Festival.
For each script: Download the venue’s submission form www.riverwalktheatre.com/submit-a-play, or get one at the office; fill it out completely. Include a copy of each script; electronic scans when possible. Main Stage committee encourages directors to consider proposing suggested titles: Chicago, Noises Off, The Drowsy Chaperone, and The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas. Either email your paperwork and script to RWT@RiverwalkTheatre.com - OR: Deliver to Riverwalk - OR: Mail to RWT P.O. Box 12249, Lansing MI 48901.

Save the date: November 4 is music and poetry at RWT Saturday Night!

Tom Heideman has once again assembled a new and interesting array of performers — this time with a classical/jazz flair. He and Mary Koenigsknecht will perform, and welcome Bryan Guarnuccio and Chris Rollins playing classical flute and guitar, and DJClarinet Combo (Doug Carleton, Duncan Tarr and Nathan Borton) playing jazz. Sadly Tom’s poet friend David James is not able to charm us this year, but the “poetry slot” will be well filled with Dennis Hinrichsen, selected last April as the Inaugural Lansing Poet Laureate. lansingpoet.weebly.com

Supported in part by MICHIGAN COUNCIL FOR ARTS AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS • NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS • INGHAM COUNTY HOTEL/MOTEL TAX GRANT through the ARTS COUNCIL OF GREATER LANSING