

PRAY THE GAY AWAY®

a serious musical comedy

NEWS RELEASE

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“Pray the Gay Away”® Gay Conversion Therapy Hits the Stage

MOUNT VERNON, WA - Theater Arts Guild presents the world premiere of *Pray the Gay Away*®, a serious musical comedy, November 8-24 at the Lincoln Theatre in Mount Vernon, WA.

Pray the Gay Away® takes place in 1980’s Minnetonka, Minnesota and shows the collision course of two boys being subjected to the controversial practice of gay conversion therapy, the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod that says “homosexual behavior is intrinsically sinful”, a Youth Pride LGBTQ support group fighting for human rights, and the local community caught in the middle.

For his fourth full-length musical, **Conrad Askland**, former music director of *Cirque du Soleil* and *Rock of Ages*, has focused his satire on the cultural, political and theological forces that surround the painful world of gay conversion therapy and the “pray away the gay” movement. This is a big, full-blooded musical with an irreverently comic heart that is also heart-breaking and emotionally charged. *Pray the Gay Away* pulls up the carpet to expose the underlying U.S. religious, political and cultural attitudes surrounding homosexuality and our understanding of human rights.

Ria Peth, President of Theater Arts Guild, shares that “Cast members have said a lot already that this show is changing their lives and it hasn’t even gone on stage yet. It’s very well researched. It’s a story based on facts.” Cast member Jennifer Jacobs says, “The story and the music provide a pathway for better and more profound understanding of the barbarism of conversion therapy...” and “It’s beautiful and it’s uncomfortable...”. Cast member Jocelyn Amouria says “While this show is set in the 1980s, everything about it is still relevant and important in today’s society. Even if it helps just one person it’ll have been worth it.”

Pray the Gay Away, a serious musical comedy, performs live at the Lincoln Theatre in Mount Vernon, WA from Nov. 8-24, 2019. Tickets for the show range from \$13 to \$24 and can be purchased at lincolntheatre.org, by calling the Lincoln Theatre Box Office at 360-336-8955.

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