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**Custom Made Theatre Opens 2015-2016 Season
with Kenneth Lonergan's 2015 Tony-nominated
This is Our Youth, September 18 – October 17**

Press night/opening is Sun, Sept 20 at 7pm

San Francisco. August 20, 2015. Custom Made Theatre Company opens its 17th Season with Kenneth Lonergan's *This is Our Youth*, September 18 through October 17 at the company's new location, the renamed Custom Made Theatre at 533 Sutter St. (at Powell) just north of Union Square. Custom Made Theatre takes over the former home of SF Playhouse and Tides Theatre.

The production is directed by Custom Made Artistic Director, Brian Katz. Its youthful cast includes Sam Bertken, who played Peter in Custom Made's *Peter/Wendy*, Katie Robbins, who was nominated for a Theatre Bay Area Award for Best Featured Actress in last season's *Top Girls*, and David Raymond, recently seen in *Moby Dick: Rehearsed* at Stanford Repertory.



Hot off a recent Broadway run starring Michael Cera and Kieran Culkin, *This is Our Youth* follows forty-eight hours in the lives of three very lost young souls.

19 year-old, shy Warren has stolen \$15,000 from his abusive father and turns to his bullying friend Dennis to hide both him and the money. Dennis then hatches a plan to score a major drug deal with the money, as well as to help romance Jessica, the girl Warren pines for. By turns funny, caustic and compassionate, it is a snapshot of the moment when many young people go out into the world, far less effectual than they could possibly imagine.



Front: Sam Bertken (Warren.) Behind: Katie Robbins (Jessica), David Raymond (Dennis) in the Custom Made Theatre production of Kenneth Lonergan's *This is Our Youth*. Photo: Claire Rice.

"This is Our Youth is more than a slice-of-life play", says director Katz, "it is about a fascinating society-shifting period when the children of 60's liberals, who had witnessed their parent's disillusionment, struck out on their own – but without much hope for finding meaning. I was only 10 in 1982 (when the play is set), but there was a similar feeling for those of us who came of age later in the decade, which attracted me to this play immediately.

In *Youth*, there's a lot of drugs, and a little sex, but also this incredibly written humor and wit coming from three really smart characters. In the end, as an audience, you want

desperately for them to figure it out, to hope they will come out okay, but this play reminds us that, despite privilege, leaving adolescence and emerging into adulthood can be a very frantic and dangerous time," Katz explains.

The New York Times said *This is Our Youth* "captures so beautifully ... the sense of being lost, formless and on your own that descends as adolescence comes to an end and every feeling seems to contradict itself."

Kenneth Lonergan (Playwright) is an Oscar, and Pulitzer Prize, nominated author. Lonergan's first play, *The Rennings Children*, was chosen for the Stephen Sondheim-founded Young Playwright's Festival in 1982 while he was still an undergraduate at Wesleyan University where he trained as a playwright and director. He went on to graduate from the NYU Playwriting Program. After NYU, Lonergan worked as a speechwriter for the Environmental Protection Agency. He also wrote industrial shows for clients such as Weight Watchers and Fujifilm. Lonergan's first theatrical success came with the play *This is Our Youth* (1996); it was followed by *The Waverley Gallery* (1999), based on his grandmother's Greenwich Village Gallery, and later *Lobby Hero* (2002). His play, *The Starry Messenger* premiered Off-Broadway in 2009 and starred his wife, J. Smith-Cameron, and Matthew Broderick. *This is Our Youth* was nominated for a Drama Desk Award in 1996 and a Tony award in 2015.

Lonergan's film career began with his screenplay for the gangland comedy *Analyze This* (1999). He was subsequently offered a job writing *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle* (2000). Lonergan directed his own screenplay for *You Can Count on Me* (2000); the film, which was executive produced by Martin Scorsese, went on to be nominated for and receive numerous writing awards. He contributed to the screenplay for *Gangs of New York* (2002), which was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Screenplay. His work has won, or been nominated for, over a dozen major awards, including a nomination for a Pulitzer Prize for *The Waverly Gallery*.

Brian Katz (Director) is the Founding Artistic Director of Custom Made Theatre Co.. For the company he has directed over thirty productions including the SF Bay Area Critic's Circle Best Overall Play of 2012: *Edward Albee's The Play About the Baby*. Other recent projects include Kushner's *A Bright Room Called Day* (nominee, Best Director, SFBATCC), *Next to Normal* (nominee, Best Overall Production), and the regional premieres of *Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five*, *Spalding Gray: Stories Left to Tell*, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, *The Love Song of J. Robert Oppenheimer*, and *Red Light Winter* among many others. He has worked at Cal Shakes, Berkeley Rep, the Goodman Theatre, Killing My Lobster, and other cool institutions. Brian is an alumnus of Clark University. After *Youth*, he will helm the San Francisco premiere of Will Eno's *Middletown* in March '16.

Show Times and Tickets

Previews: September 18 & 19 at 8:00 pm;

Opens Sept. 20, 7:00 pm

Runs: September 18 – October 17; Wed 7:30*; Thurs-Fri 8pm; Sat 2pm & 8pm

Tickets \$20-42

Learn more & buy tickets at (415) 798-CMTC (2682), <http://www.custommade.org>

*No performance September 23.

For Calendar Editors

This is Our Youth. Kenneth Lonergan's Tony-nominated exploration of forty-eight hours in the lives of three very lost young souls. By turns funny, caustic and compassionate, it is a snapshot of the moment when many young are thrown unprepared into a broken world.

Directed by Brian Katz. Previews Sept. 18 & 19 at 8:00 pm; Opens 20 at 7:00pm.. Runs Sept. 18-Oct. 17, Wed 7:30pm (no 9/23 perf.), Thurs-Fri 8:00 pm, Sat 2pm and 8pm.

Tickets \$20-42. Custom Made Theatre, 533 Sutter St. (at Powell), San Francisco 94102. (415) 798-CMTC (2682), www.custommade.org.

Custom Made Theatre Company 2015/16 Season

Sept 18-Oct 17 - *This is Our Youth* by Kenneth Lonergan

Nov 12-Dec 12 - *In Love and Warcraft* by Madhuri Shekar - Regional Premiere.

Jan 7-23, 2016 - *Of Serpents and Sea Spray* by Rachel Bublitz - World Premiere.

Feb 11-Mar 5, 2016 - *Sam and Dede, or My Dinner with Andre the Giant* by Gino Dilorio - World Premiere.

March 24-April 23, 2016 - *Middletown* by Will Eno – San Francisco Premiere.

May 19-June 18, 2016 - *Six Degrees of Separation* by John Guare

New Address: The company moves into the 99-seat theatre at **533 Sutter St, second floor, San Francisco, CA 94102** - former home to SF Playhouse, and more recently, Tides Theatre.

Phone: (415) 798-2682; **Web:** www.custommade.org

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