

# THE LIST

## THEATER

### MAJOR HOUSES

**AFTER THE WAR** An impressive, revolving Victorian boarding-house set symbolizes the massive ambitions of Philip Kan Gotanda's large-cast, 2½-hour drama of the historically fraught interface between returning Japanese American internees and the African American community that had replaced them in San Francisco's 1948 Japanese Town. Gotanda creates a multi-racial array of sharply drawn characters, beautifully embodied by a first-rate cast in Carey Perloff's world premiere, but the interactions grow thinner, less developed and somewhat didactic in a second act that still seems like a work-in-progress. Ends today. \$12-\$80. At the American Conservatory Theater, 415 Geary St., S.F. (415) 749-2228. [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org).

— R. Hurwitt

**BLUE DOOR** Teagle F. Bougere incisively creates the lineage of one family — from slavery through white supremacist terrorism to modern times — as David Fonteno's magnetically repressed, African American math professor undergoes a long night of soul-searching after his wife has left him. Some aspects of Tanya Barfield's debut drama are as schematic as an illustrated history lesson, but her writing is electrifyingly original and noted actor Delroy Lindo, in his local directorial debut, has staged the 90-minute drama as expertly as it's performed. Through May 20. At the Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Thrust Stage, 2025 Addison St., Berkeley. (510) 647-2949. [www.berkeleyrep.org](http://www.berkeleyrep.org).

— R. Hurwitt

**JERSEY BOYS** "Sherry," "Big Girls Don't Cry" and "Walk Like a Man" kick the musical bio of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons into high gear in Best of Broadway's first touring production of director Des McAnuff's dynamically staged, Tony-winning Broadway hit. The songs and the story grow less interesting in the second act of the 2½-hour musical, but the engaging performers and generally expertly rendered oldies make for an entertaining, energetic jolt of nostalgia. Through Sept. 30. \$30-\$90. At the Curran Theatre, 445 Geary St., S.F. (415) 512-7770. [www.shnsf.com](http://www.shnsf.com).

— R. Hurwitt

**MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG** Robert Kelley's sharp, energetic and blissfully tuneful, 2½-hour TheatreWorks revival of Stephen Sondheim and George Furth's oft and extensively revised 1981 Broadway flop, in its most current version, is probably about as good as it gets. Sondheim's masterfully interwo-



Cliff McCormick stars as Dr. Henry Jekyll in Palo Alto Players' production of "Jekyll & Hyde, the Musical," previewing Friday and opening Saturday at the Lucie Stern Theatre in Palo Alto.

PHOTO: COLAZZINI

ven, irresistible melodies are beautifully sung and played, but the backward-told story of how a successful film producer sold out his youthful dreams still fails to give us much reason to care about what he might have achieved. Through April 29. \$20-\$60. At the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. (650) 903-6000. [www.theatreworks.org](http://www.theatreworks.org).

— R. Hurwitt

**NIXON'S NIXON** Director Michael Butler reprises his '97 San Jose Repertory hit, with Peter Van Norden's comically wary, befuddled Kissinger trying to get David Pichette's sly, mercurial, unbalanced Nixon to commit to resigning on the eve of that historic event. Russell Lees' 90-minute comedy, though funny, doesn't cut very deep, but current events lend it a chilling tension be-

tween revulsion, hilarity and nostalgia. Ends today. \$28-\$56. At the San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo de San Antonio, San Jose. (408) 367-7255. [www.sjrep.com](http://www.sjrep.com).

— R. Hurwitt

**PRIVATE JOKES, PUBLIC PLACES** In a savagely funny and provocatively dense, 80-minute satire on architectural vogues and ideals, Oren Salfdie (son of famed architect Moshe Salfdie) uses a professorial panel's critique of a student thesis project to raise sharp questions of art, function and humanity in design. Though the script works mostly on an intellectual rather than dramatic level, Barbara Damashek's sharply staged, hilarious production soars on the deft performances of M.J. Kang (the author's wife), Robert Parsons, Charles Dean and Max Gordon Moore. Through May 13. \$28-\$50. At

the Aurora Theatre, 2081 Addison St., Berkeley. (510) 843-4822. [www.auroratheatre.org](http://www.auroratheatre.org).

— R. Hurwitt

**SMOKEY JOE'S CAFE** American Musical Theatre of San Jose brings back the long-running revue of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller hits, featuring such songs as "Kansas City," "Poison Ivy," "Charlie Brown," "Spanish Harlem" and "Jailhouse Rock." Bill Castellino directs. Ends today. \$13.75-\$73. At the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts, 255 Almaden Blvd., San Jose. (888) 455-7469. [www.amtsj.org](http://www.amtsj.org).

### WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA

**WOOLF?** Kathleen Turner and Bill Irwin are exquisitely, excruciatingly well-matched as the eternally warring Martha and George of Edward Albee's masterful long night's verbal slugfest into dawn, revealing depths of self-awareness and eerily recognizable dependency over the course of three taut acts in three quick hours. Anthony Page's deservedly celebrated 2005 Broadway revival brings out the full bracing humor and humanity of the play, with superb supporting work by David Furr and Kathleen Early as the out-of-their-depth guests. Through May 12. \$45-\$80. At the Golden Gate Theatre, 1 Taylor St., S.F. (415) 512-7770. [www.shnsf.com](http://www.shnsf.com).

— R. Hurwitt

### SMALLER HOUSES

**BEACH BLANKET BABYLON** Still an effervescent extravaganza of silly send-ups, outrageous puns and one showstopper after another, the late Steve Silver's fast-paced, exquisitely timed topical musical revue is built to last and beautifully maintained by director Kenny Mazlow. Snow White searches for true love through a nonstop onslaught of musical, celebrity and pop-culture lampoons and fantastically sculpted hats and hairdos. Every cast member is a knockout, and longtime resident divas Val Diamond and Renée Lubin contribute surefire, devilish double takes and astonishing displays of vocal pyrotechnics. Open ended run. \$25-\$77. At the Club Fugazi, 678 Green St., S.F. (415) 421-4222. [www.beachblanketbabylon.com](http://www.beachblanketbabylon.com).

— R. Hurwitt

**BLOOD WEDDING** Infused with David McLean's eloquent flamenco guitar, staged with handsome austerity by Evren Odikian and at times passionately sung, the intense poetry of Federico Garcia Lorca's great blood-fueled tragedy illuminates and energizes this Shotgun Players production. Though somewhat unevenly performed, the almost two-hour staging reaches moments of riveting intensity. Through April 29. \$17-\$25. At the Ashby Stage, 1901 Ash-