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## Wagner College Theatre Opens URINETOWN, 2/22

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For the third Main Stage show of its 2011-12 season, the Wagner College Theatre is presenting the Broadway hit, "Urinetown: The Musical," which will run from Feb. 22 to March 4 in the Snug Harbor Music Hall on Staten Island.

"The title is emblematic, so thumb-in-the-eye unpleasant that it elicits an automatic question: Are you kidding?," wrote Bruce Weber in his New York Times review of the Broadway production. "To which the answer is, yes and no."

Here's the premise: A 20-year drought has caused a terrible water shortage, making private toilets illegal. All restroom

activities are done in public toilets controlled by a megacorporation called Urine Good Company, or UGC. To control water consumption, people have to pay to use the amenities. There are harsh laws ensuring that people pay to pee — and if those laws are broken, the offender is sent to a penal colony called Urinetown, never to return.

"Urinetown: The Musical" is a satire — of society in general and of Broadway musicals in particular. Audiences even somewhat familiar with musical theater will recognize in many of its songs echoes of famous tunes from the best-known shows of the 20th century.

The show, first staged as part of the New York Fringe Festival, was an Off Broadway hit before being produced on Broadway from late 2001 through early 2004, with nearly 1,000 performances. Nominated for nine Tony Awards, including Best Musical, "Urinetown" won Tonys for Best Book, Best Score and Best Director.

[John Carrafa](#), the Broadway production's Tony-nominated choreographer, directs and choreographs this new Wagner College production. He is no stranger to the Wagner College Theatre, having directed its production of "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" in the fall of 2010.

In this new staging of "Urinetown," Carrafa keeps it current by mirroring the Occupy Wall Street movement through the characters and plot of the show to underscore the rich/poor dichotomy at the core of the story.

"I had forgotten how much I loved the piece, and I had forgotten how relevant it is," the director said recently. "The world we're in now seems so much more like the world of 'Urinetown.' With climate change and water shortages becoming commonplace, the show feels even more relevant today than it did in 2001."

"Urinetown" features Tony Award-winning music by [Mark Hollmann](#), book by [Greg Kotis](#), and lyrics by both. Wagner faculty member Lauri Young is musical director, and senior Theatre Studies major Prerna Bhatia is assistant director. The sizable cast of 16 in this production is described by Carrafa as "amazing." It boasts seniors Chelsey Alfredo as Penelope Pennywise; Mike D'Amico as Robby the Stockfish/Urine Good Company Executive 1; Paul Emrich as Mr. McQueen; [Brian Krinsky](#) as Officer Lockstock; [Brittney Santoro](#) as Hope Cladwell; Trevor Sideris as Bobby Strong; and Chelsea Vann as Soupy Sue/Cladwell Secretary.

"Urinetown: The Musical," produced in association with [Music Theatre International](#), is staged by the Wagner College Theatre at the Music Hall on the campus of the Snug Harbor Cultural Center, 1000 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island. The show runs Wednesday through Saturday at 8 p.m. from Feb. 22 through March 3, with a 2 p.m. matinee on Saturdays, and a Sunday show at 2 p.m. on March 4.

For tickets, visit or call the Box Office at 718-390-3259.

Note that, for security purposes, Wagner College Theatre does not accept any payments or orders via email.

Also note that, due to the ongoing restoration of Main Hall, the Box Office is temporarily located in Reynolds House.