GEOFFREY KENT
Guest Director

WAITING FOR GODOT

I find myself describing *Waiting for Godot* as *King Lear* meets *Duck Soup*. It encapsulates some of the bleakest aspects of Lear but willfully bookends each of those with unexpected right turns into absurdity.

Samuel Beckett's play is certainly equal parts tragedy and comedy… witnessed by you… and trust me, Didi and Gogo know you are watching. We don't know how long they have been there. We don't know if they can leave. We don't know how it will end. But we do have a cue from our playwright.

"…packs a love letter to the joy of American vaudeville and Beckett's passion for the Marx Brothers."

The French title of our play is *En Attendant Godot*, which Beckett translated into *Waiting for Godot* for its British premiere in 1955. But it can just as easily be translated into *While Waiting for Godot*. So, with our title character nowhere to be seen and with nothing to do (and no Wi-Fi) our two vagabonds will entertain and insult each other. Create games and activities. Contemplate suicide. Gnaw turnips. Sing songs. Stare into the abyss of human suffering. Pass gas. Do laundry. Fall down. And cling to each other like a life raft.

It asks us to consider many questions. What would you do? Are you responsible for this permanent companion? Or in the face of the void can you simply say, "Me first!" This play is achingly and inescapably human.

And while *Godot* certainly hoists the torch for absurdist theatre and carries the weight of the grief of the world coming to grips with the Holocaust, it also packs a love letter to the joy of American vaudeville and Beckett's passion for the Marx Brothers. So one hopes our production contains equal parts Lear's, "O! Let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven," and Groucho's, "He may look like an idiot and talk like an idiot but don't let that fool you. He really is an idiot."
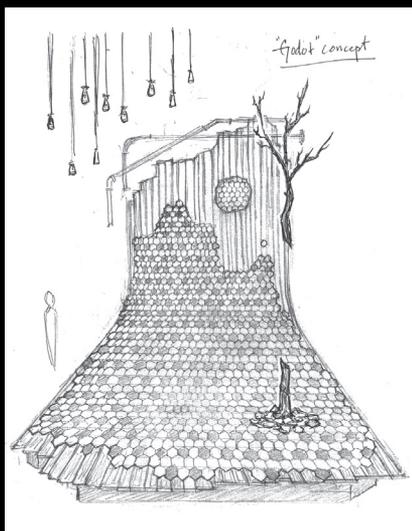
Preliminary scenic sketch by Brian Mallgrave 2017

Costume design by Meghan Anderson Doyle 2017