

NEWS RELEASE

Release Date: 2/26/2026

Organization: TheatreMidwest

Contact: Tom Woldt

Email Address: tom.woldt@theatremidwest.org



TheatreMidwest At The Des Moines Playhouse Presents Timely Play; Return Of Cloris-Award-Nominated Performance.

*-Professional local company returns to its Artistic Home City, Des Moines, to present EM Lewis' exploration of the wide social and political terrain of America's most dangerous pastime, **The Gun Show** at Des Moines Playhouse, March 26, 27, 28 at 7:30 p.m.*

*-**Katie Braden**, a graduate of Glidden Ralston High School and Simpson College, returns from New York in the tour de force performance for which she was a 2025 Cloris Award Outstanding Actor nominee.*

*-TheatreMidwest returns to The Playhouse following the successful 2025 collaboration with the World Premiere of **The Gull; A Tragicomedy For One, After Chekhov** by Zachary Cohn.*

Des Moines, IA (February 26, 2026) –Award-winning playwright E.M. Lewis tells the story of America's relationship with guns through the prism of her own personal experiences. She starts during her youth in a rural farming community where she learns about guns from her dad, has her first date with a special person at a shooting range, and then, as life's journey takes her to 'big cities' like Los Angeles and New York, finds herself in more complicated, less upbeat, and sometimes dangerous, gun situations. Using a light, often hilarious touch, Lewis takes us on a 45-minute journey across the wide social and political terrain of America's most dangerous pastime with brutal honesty and keen understanding. Leaning neither right nor left, **The Gun Show** jumps into the middle of the gun control debate and asks, "Can we just have a conversation about this?"

TheatreMidwest presents this project in the Marshall & Julie Linn Studio Theatre at the **Des Moines Playhouse**, as part of its ongoing regional and national touring activities. Over the past 18 months, TheatreMidwest has delivered performances and residencies in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Nebraska, New York, with more on the horizon. This project provides accessible theatre-going opportunities by bringing the work to many wide-ranging communities, and by maintaining the company's commitment to Radical Hospitality—the removal of barriers, especially cost, that can discourage people from going to the theatre.

The Gun Show performs at the Des Moines Playhouse Marshall & Julie Linn Studio Theatre, March 26-28 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at the DM Playhouse <https://dmplayhouse.com/ents/theatremidwest-presents-the-gun-show/#>

More information can also be found at TheatreMidwest's **Gun Show** homepage: <https://www.theatremidwest.org/the-gun-show.html>.

TheatreMidwest Company:

"*The Playwright*" (Actor): Katie Braden

Director: Karen Eterovich

Producing Artistic Director: Tom Woldt

Technical Coordinator: Kate Kanne-Smith

Company Members: Lindsey Oetken, Katie Buchholz, Nadine Purvis-Schmidt, Joan Korte, Cory Johnson

The Gun Show is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.
www.concordtheatricals.com

EVENT BASICS

THE GUN SHOW by EM Lewis.

TheatreMidwest at Des Moines Playhouse, 831 42nd Street, Des Moines, IA, 50312.

When: Times CST.

Thursday, 3/26, Friday, 3/27, Saturday, 3/28 at 7:30 pm

-Artist-Audience Conversation Immediately Following Each Performance.

-Running Time: 45-60 minutes

Where: Studio Theatre, Des Moines Playhouse

TheatreMidwest Information: <https://www.theatremidwest.org/the-gun-show.html>

Tickets and Related Info: <https://dmplayhouse.com/events/theatremidwest-presents-the-gun-show/#>

Cost: \$20. Radical Hospitality Strategy is in effect for reduced and no-cost ticketing (see below.)

Brief Synopsis: TheatreMidwest continues their Season 6 with **The Gun Show**, by EM Lewis, at The Des Moines Playhouse. This Cloris Award-Nominated production explores the journey of America's relationship with guns through the prism of the playwright's own personal experiences. Using a light, often hilarious touch, Lewis takes us across the wide social and political terrain of America's most dangerous pastime and asks, "Can we just have a conversation about this?"

CONTENT NOTE: While it's mostly a comedy, this production includes discussions about guns, shooting, robbery, and suicide.

TheatreMidwest homepage: <https://www.theatremidwest.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheatreMidwest/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/theatremidwest/>

###

ABOUT THEATREMIDWEST

TheatreMidwest is a 501c3 nonprofit arts organization, founded in 2018.

MISSION:

Professionals creating works of relevance to the people of the Midwest, with particular attention to the voices of women and other under-represented groups.

TheatreMidwest strives to:

- *Produce theatrical events of the highest quality.*
- *Connect with MidWestern communities with pertinent stories and storytelling.*
- *Lift up the voices, thoughts, artistry, and dreams of women and other under-represented groups that speak to the MidWestern experience.*
- *Reduce barriers that prevent or discourage people from attending live performances.*
- *Sustain a strong cultural presence in our communities.*

ABOUT RADICAL HOSPITALITY

Founded on the belief that live theatre should be a whole lot more accessible to a whole lot more people.

TheatreMidwest uses “Radical Hospitality” as a guiding principle to reduce barriers that keep the public from seeing live theatre in the following ways:

- *Creating free and reduced price ticket opportunities*
- *Curating plays relevant to Midwestern audiences and ensuring women and under-represented artists have prominent roles in artistic and leadership positions*
- *Bringing theatre to underserved, diverse, and wide-ranging communities*
- *Actively reaching out to communities who do not regularly attend performances and inviting them to the theatre.*

More information and protocols for Radical Hospitality (reduced or \$0 ticketing):

<https://www.theatremidwest.org/radical-hospitality.html>