



Press Contact: Judith Borne (310) 305-7888 or <http://www.borneidentities.com/contact-us.html>

A queer love story, about all of us...

Olivier Award Winner & West Coast Premiere from Skylight Theatre Company

“Rotterdam” by Jon Brittain

Directed by Ovation Award Winner Michael A. Shepperd

EXTENDED through January 28, 2018

8:30pm on Fridays & Saturdays, 2:00pm on Sundays, and 8:00pm on Mondays

Skylight Theatre, 1816 ½ North Vermont, Los Angeles, CA 90027

Los Angeles (December 18, 2017) - New Year's. Rotterdam, 2017. Alice has finally found the courage to email her parents to tell them she's a lesbian. But before Alice hits send, her girlfriend Fiona reveals that she has always identified as a man, and now wants to live as one, sending their relationship into a tailspin.

Amid a breaking wave of transgender stories in popular culture (*Transparent*, *Boy Meets Girl*, and *Orange is the New Black*), Jon Brittain has created a groundbreaking play, with deeply relatable characters that are flawed, and hilarious. *Rotterdam* is a comedy with powerful questions about love and identity at its core.

Jon Brittain received the **Olivier Award** in 2017 for Outstanding Achievement in an Affiliate Theatre and was nominated for the **Charles Wintour Award for Most Promising Playwright** at the **Evening Standard Awards**, with a nomination for the Off West End Award as well. His plays include *The Wake*, *The Sexual Awakening of Peter Mayo*, *What Would Spock Do?* and *A Super Happy Story (About Feeling Super Sad)*. Brittain co-created the critically acclaimed show *Margaret Thatcher Queen of Soho* (winner of both the **Brighton Argus Angel for Artistic Excellence**, at Brighton Fringe, and the **Micheál Mac Liammóir Award for Best Male Performance** at the Dublin International Gay Theatre Festival) and its sequel *Margaret Thatcher Queen of Game Shows*. He was one of the 503Five 2012/2013, and has worked extensively with **Old Vic New Voices**. Brittain has written for Radio 4's *The Now Show* and the Cartoon Network's *The Amazing World of Gumball*. He created and starred in the online sketch show *HodgePodge*.

"Everything I've ever written has had some kind of comedic angle to it. To entertain someone is an excellent way to open them up to new thoughts," says Brittain. "This story is an optimistic one. Given what's happening in the world today, I think we need a bit of optimism."

"To live your truth out loud can be dangerous," added director Michael A. Shepperd. "But to take that step into your authentic self can make you much more powerful than anything the world can throw at you. This is the world of Rotterdam."

Michael A. Shepperd (Director) is the Co-Artistic Director of Los Angeles' award-winning Celebration Theatre. Directing credits include: *The Boy From Oz* (**Ovation Award, LADCC Award, Best Director**), *The View Upstairs*, *The Next Fairy Tale*, [title of show], *A Gay Christmas Carol*, *GaGa Gardens*, *The Max Factor Factor*, and *Rent*. Michael is a **Resident Director for The Blank Theatre's Young Playwrights Festival** and numerous others. Acting roles include *Fences* (Troy; **Ovation, LADCC Nominations**), *Bootycandy* (**LADCC nom, Ovation, Stage Raw Win**), *The Color Purple* (Mister; **Ovation Award**), *Steel* (**Ovation Award**), *Master Harold and the Boys* (**NAACP theatre nom**), *Intimate Apparel* (**NAACP Award**), and *Choir Boy* (**NAACP nom**). Broadway/Regional credits include: *Cathy Rigby is Peter Pan*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Caroline, or Change*, *Whipping Man*. TV: *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *Soul Man*, *Hot In Cleveland*, *Wizards of Waverly Place*, *Monk*, *Criminal Minds*, *NCIS*. #transisbeautiful

Gary Grossman (Producer) is the recipient of **Stage Raw's 2016 "Career Achievement Award"**, and he is the Producing Artistic Director for Skylight Theatre Company. He started his career in New York owning two theaters

and a theatrical lighting company by the age of 23. Gary worked at the Public Theatre, Café La Mama, and Sheraton Square Playhouse before traveling west in the 70's to join up with the emerging theatre moment in Los Angeles. He has produced over 300 stage plays, including more than 50 world premieres. Among his celebrated productions are the **World Premieres of *Church & State*** (debuting Off-Broadway on March 2017), *Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea* (**Steinberg/National Theatre Critics Citation**), *Lord of the Underworld's Home for Unwed Mothers* (**Humanitas/CTG Playwriting Prize**), *El Grande CIRCUS de Coca-Cola*, *Wrong Man* (**3 Ovation Awards**), *Pray To Ball* (**1 Ovation Award**), *Years to the Day*, *Hermetically Sealed*, *Bullrusher*, *Sexsting*, *Mad Women* (**LA Weekly Award**), *Romeo and Juliet* directed by Milton Katselas (**3 LADCC Awards**), *Dylan* (**3 LADCC Awards**), *Influence*, *Open House*, *Dream Man*, *Lone Star*, *Balm in Gilead*, *Visions and Lovers*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Beautified* and *La Ronde de Lunch*.

Tony Abatamarco (Producer) is the Co-Artistic Director of Skylight Theatre Company. He served as Director of LA Live! at the Natural History Museum and was Artistic Director of Jacques D'Amboise' National Dance Institute at The Mark Taper Forum, for Center Theatre Group. Recognized for his work directing **Julie Harris in *Lucifer's Child* on Broadway** and for A & E TV, he directed Robyn Peterson's *Catwalk Confidential* at the Arts Theatre in London's West End. Regional directing credits include work at the Pasadena Playhouse, The Taper Too, Santa Fe Stages, La MaMa ETC, and Theatre Grévin in Paris. In Los Angeles Abatamarco is the recipient of **6 LA Weekly and 18 DramaLogue Awards for Direction**. A graduate of The Juilliard Drama Division, as an actor he has won top honors for his lead performances in *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (**Ovation & LA Weekly Awards**), *Bach at Leipzig* (LA Drama Critics' Circle nom), *La Bete* (Ovation Award nom), *Slow Motion* (LA Weekly and LA Drama Critics' Circle Award nom), and his original *Four Fathers* (**LA Weekly and DramaLogue Awards**). Tony won the **first Ted Schmitt "Innovation in Small Theatre Award"** from Theatre LA and he was the recipient of the **first DGA/SSDC George Stevens Observership**.

Andrew Carlberg (Producer) was named by **Variety** alongside Mindy Kaling, Ryan Coogler and Beau Willimon as one of "**Hollywood's New Leaders**." He is an award-winning feature film, television, new media, Broadway and Los Angeles stage producer. Andrew's extensive credits include, but aren't limited to, ABC's *Castle*, DirecTV's *Full Circle*, Broadway's *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Side Show*, as well as the Neil LaBute penned feature films *Some Girl(s)* and *Dirty Weekend*. His Los Angeles credits include Celebration Theatre's **Ovation Award winning productions of *The Color Purple: The Musical* and *The Boy From Oz***.

Josh Gershick (Associate Producer) is the Dramatists Guild's Southern California regional representative. His works include the plays *Dear ONE: Love & Longing in Mid-Century Queer America*, *Coming Attractions* and *Bluebonnet Court*, winner of the **GLAAD Award for Outstanding Los Angeles Theatre**; the film *Door Prize*, winner of the **Alfred C. Kinsey Award**; and the books *Gay Old Girls* and *Secret Service: Untold Stories of Lesbians in the Military*. He is a former newspaper reporter, editor, publicist & professor.

Skylight Theatre Company discovers, develops and produces new, exhilarating works that expand mainstream theatre while nurturing and educating the people who create them. A recipient of the prestigious **Steinberg National Theatre Critics Citation** (*Dontrell, Who Kissed The Sea* – Nathan Alan Davis), Skylight's resident PlayLAB writers have been recognized with productions nationwide, a national **2014 USA Ford Fellowship in Theater and Performance** (Sigrid Gilmer), and locally as a winner in the **2015 Humanitas/CTG Playwriting Prize** (Louisa Hill – *Lord of the Underworld's Home for Unwed Mothers*). Skylight won **4 Ovation Awards** in 2014 for *The Wrong Man* and *Pray To Ball* (**the most of any intimate theatre in LA**). LA Weekly included the Skylight's productions of *Years To The Day*, *Open House* and *Sexsting* on their **Top Ten** list of plays for 2013. Their first year as a company dedicated to developing new plays, 2011, found Skylight's production of *Hermetically Sealed* on the **LA Times annual list of Top Ten Plays**, while *Mad Women* **moved from Los Angeles to La MaMa in New York**. Since then, plays developed by Skylight have been performed Off-Broadway and in other New York theaters, Chicago, Washington D.C., Oregon, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Kansas City, and internationally in Scotland and France. For more information, script submission policy and production history go to <http://skylighttheatre.org>

Hartshorn – Hook Productions Ltd. are the **Olivier Award**-winning producers of *Rotterdam* at Trafalgar Studios. Founded in 2007 by Louis Hartshorn and Brian Hook, H+H has produced over 70 shows, including *Woody Sez* (**nominated Best West End Musical, ES Awards**); *Away From Home* (**winner 24:7 awards Best Actor and MTA awards Best New Play**); and *Some Small Love Story* (**nominated MTM: UK Best Lyrics**). Additional West End credits include *Murder Ballad* (Arts); *Urinetown* (Apollo); *American Idiot* (Arts and UK Tour) and *The Blues Brothers: Xmas Special* (Arts) and a production of *Richard II* performed in the Palace of Westminster. International work includes the *Away From Home* world tour, concluding in Auckland, New Zealand, and *The Rat Pack – Live*, which has toured across the UK, Europe and Africa. Hartshorn – Hook is a co-producer of the central London transfer of the Guild of Misrule’s immersive *The Great Gatsby*.

Cast: **Ryan Brophy** as Josh (**Young Arts 2014 Finalist/Silver Award winner**); **Audrey Cain** as Lelani (East West Players production of *La Cage Aux Folles*, and *Friends in Transient Places* by Fresh Produce’d LA with appearances at the Fountain Theatre, Chalk Rep and EST-LA); **Ashley Romans** as Fiona/Adrian (*Charm* at Celebration Theatre in 2016, and *The Devil Lives in Clarksville County*); **Miranda Wynne** as Alice (Cissy Franks in the West Coast premiere of *Punk Rock* at the Odyssey Theatre Ensemble).

Production Team: Jeff McLaughlin (Set and Lighting Design), Christopher Moscatiello (Sound Design), Naila Aladdin Sanders (Costume Design), Christopher Aguilar (Asst. to the Director), Tuffet Schmelzle (Dialect Coach), Raul Clayton Staggs (Casting Director)

Rotterdam runs at 8:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays; 2:00pm on Sundays; and 8:00pm on Mondays through January 28, 2018. Skylight Theatre is located at 1816 1/2 N. Vermont Ave, LA, 90027. Tickets are \$15 - \$41. Reservations: 213-761-7061 or 866-811-4111. Online at <http://SkylightTix.com>

Calendar Listing Information:

What: Skylight Theatre Company & Hartshorn - Hook Productions present the West Coast Premiere of *Rotterdam* by Jon Brittain
Directed by Michael A. Shepperd
Produced by Gary Grossman, Tony Abatemarco, and Andrew Carlberg in Association with Providence Entertainment, Ltd.

Where:

THE SKYLIGHT THEATRE
1816 ½ North Vermont
Los Angeles, CA. 90027
Parking information: <http://skylighttheatrecompany.com/index.php/about-us/directions-a-parking-info>

When:

Opened: November 11, 2017
Schedule: 8:30pm on Fridays, Saturdays, 2:00pm on Sundays, and 8:00pm on Mondays
Extended through January 28, 2018

How: Reservations: (213) 761-7061, (866) 811-4111 or online at SkylightTix.com

How Much: \$15 - \$41

All seating is General Admission unless Reserved Seat is purchased.
Reserved: \$41 Adults: \$35 Seniors: \$29 Under 30: \$25 Students & Previews: \$15 - \$20

Facebook: SkylightTheatre **Twitter:** @SkylightThtr #RotterdamLA

Instagram: SkylightTheatre

Website: <http://skylighttheatre.org>

Description: New Year's. Rotterdam, 2017. Alice has finally found the courage to email her parents to tell them she's a lesbian. But before Alice hits send, her girlfriend Fiona reveals that she has always identified as a man, and now wants to live as one, sending their relationship into a tailspin.