



Harris Center

Three Stages at Folsom Lake College

Contact: Dave Webb
Phone: 530-400-1253
E-mail: davidmarketing1@gmail.com
Web: harriscenter.net/about/press-room

THE ACTORS' GANG BRING *THE NEW COLOSSUS* TO FOLSOM; DIRECTOR TIM ROBBINS WILL BE IN THE AUDIENCE AND WILL LEAD POST-PERFORMANCE DISCUSSION

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free"—it's a personal story in The New Colossus, as cast members share the stories of their families coming to America

(February 20, 2020, Folsom, CA) In this intensely physical production, cast members from The Actor's Gang tell their ancestors' stories in twelve different eras, all woven into a single narrative about escaping an oppressive homeland and being drawn to the beacon above Ellis Island. The play was work-shopped during the Obama years in a reaction to the Syrian refugee crises; the director of the show, **Academy Award-winner Tim Robbins** told the *Los Angeles Times*, "I looked around at our company, and we have people from all over the world, so I asked everyone to really think about their own families and how they found their way here." Performed in twelve languages, each used sparsely, and interspersed with live music, poetry, and kinetic movement, the play concludes with a question — who are we as a country? "*The New Colossus* holds a theatrical mirror to the nation" (*Los Angeles Times*).

Following each Folsom performance, an in-depth discussion will be facilitated by the director. Tim Robbins will lead the cast and audience in a conversation centering on the immigrant and refugee experience, during which audience members will be encouraged to share their own personal stories, as well as their immediate reactions to the work. The Harris Center is excited to welcome Mr. Robbins to Stage One; his availability is subject to change.

The national tour of *The New Colossus* comes to the Harris Center Tuesday, March 3 and on Wednesday, March 4 at 7:30 pm (same time both days). Tickets are \$28-\$52; Premium: \$62. Students with ID \$12. Tickets are available online at www.harriscenter.net or from the Harris Center Ticket Office at 916-608-6888 from 12 noon to 6 pm, Tuesday through Saturday (please note new hours), and

two hours before show time. Parking is included in the price of the ticket. The Harris Center is located on the west side of Folsom Lake College campus in Folsom, CA, facing East Bidwell Street.

The northern migration after the Civil War is where the story starts, with a woman, a freed slave, who heads north, up the Mississippi River, to escape the death squads of the KKK; a Finnish woman flees the Russian invasion in 1904 and winds up in Superior, Arizona; a Jewish woman escapes the Nazis and arrives in Brooklyn, New York in 1938; a Malaysian child acrobat, born into a family of performers, escapes the Japanese invasion and makes her way to San Francisco in 1944; a Hungarian flees Communism in 1950; a woman risks her life to escape Vietnam after Saigon falls and comes to Los Angeles in 1978; an Iranian whose family is in danger after the revolution in 1979 comes to Colorado; a Mexican woman who fears for her life in a town run by a drug cartel flees to California in 1993; and a Turkish dissident attempts to flee Istanbul in 2017.

Performed in 12 languages with live music, poetry and kinetic movement, the play concludes with a question—who are we as a nation? Set between 1868 and today, **THE NEW COLOSSUS** is an homage to the strength, resilience and dignity of the immigrants and refugees who left their homes behind and risked their lives to find a better life.

Director Tim Robbins states, *“The story of our ancestors’ journeys to freedom are epic stories of survival, full of difficulty, danger, distrust, camaraderie and courage, of insurmountable obstacles overcome by hope and heroism. **The New Colossus** is a story of resilience, of extraordinary people living through extremely difficult challenges, holding on to their desire to survive, to live and breathe in freedom.”*

THE NEW COLOSSUS shares a title with the sonnet written by poet Emma Lazarus in 1883 for an exhibit to raise funds for the pedestal for the Statue of Liberty, which opened in 1886. Even though the Statue of Liberty was not conceived as a symbol of immigration, Lazarus’ “The New Colossus” reinvented the statue’s purpose, turning Liberty into a welcoming mother, a symbol of hope to the outcasts and oppressed of the world.

*Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!*

“In every generation, there’s a new wave of people who hold so much hope, and so much passion for the idea of freedom that they leave everything they know and love behind and risk their lives to attain it. This is a story that unites us from our beginnings until now,” added Robbins.

At the end of each performance, the actors and Mr. Robbins will engage the audience and ask them to share either their experience of immigration or their family's experience. People from all over the world have been found in *The New Colossus* audience; a true representation of the character and makeup of this country we share.

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About Tim Robbins

For the past 38 years, Tim Robbins has served as Artistic Director for The Actors' Gang, a theater company formed in 1981 that has over 150 productions and more than 100 awards to their credit. Past productions with The Actors' Gang include: As Writer/Director – *Harlequino On to Freedom* (2017), *Break the Whip* (2010–11) and many more. As Director – *Johnny Got His Gun* (2018), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2012-16), *Orwells' 1984* (2006–16), and many more. Begun in 2006, The Actors' Gang's groundbreaking Prison Project now provides rehabilitative programming to incarcerated men and women extensively in the Los Angeles area.

As Actor, credits include the current Focus Pictures release, *Dark Waters*, as well as *Mystic River*, *The Shawshank Redemption*, *The Player*, *Bull Durham* and *Jacob's Ladder* and the current Hulu series "Castle Rock." As a Producer/Writer/Director, credits include *Dead Man Walking*, *Cradle Will Rock* and *Bob Roberts*. Robbins has won the Academy Award, Golden Globe, Sag Award, Humanitas Award, the Prix d'Interprétation Masculine at the Cannes Film Festival and French Officier de L'Ordre Des Arts et Des Lettres.

This Year Marks Nine Seasons of Great Shows. Up Close. In Folsom!

The Harris Center for the Arts at Folsom Lake College brings the community together to share in cultural experiences, presenting the work of artists from throughout the region and around the world. Built and operated by the Los Rios Community College District, the \$50 million, state-of-the-art regional performing arts center boasts three intimate venues with outstanding acoustics, an art gallery, a recording studio, elegant teaching spaces, plenty of safe parking and all the other amenities of a world-class performing arts venue. Each year the Center hosts over 400 events attracting 150,000 annually.

Event Summary

What: *The New Colossus*
When: Tuesday, March 3 and on Wednesday, March 4 at 7:30 pm
Where: 10 College Parkway
Folsom, CA 95630
Ticket Price: \$28-\$52; Premium: \$62. Students with ID \$12
Tickets: www.HarrisCenter.net

Tickets are available online at www.HarrisCenter.net or from Harris Center Ticket Office at 916-608-6888 from noon to 6 pm, Tuesday through Saturday, and two hours before show time.

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