

HARLEQUIN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Newlyweds, New Apartment, No Idea: Young Love Gets Put to the Test in *Barefoot in the Park*

Olympia, WA – July 21, 2026 – Harlequin Productions presents *Barefoot in the Park* by Neil Simon, August 21 – September 6, 2026 at the State Theater in downtown Olympia. Karen Lund will direct and Aaron Lamb will associate direct.

Paul and Corie Bratter are newlyweds in every sense of the word: he's a strait-laced lawyer; she's a free spirit chasing her next thrill. As Paul's pragmatism clashes with Corie's spontaneity, only a barefoot sprint through Washington Square can save their marriage. Smart, snappy, and full of heart, Tony Award-winning Barefoot in the Park opened on Broadway in 1963 and ran for 1,530 performances, becoming Neil Simon's first smash hit and one of the ten longest running plays in Broadway history. Today, Simon's landmark comedy remains an American stage treasure, its sparkling wit and heartfelt charm as irresistible as ever.

Director Karen Lund, Producing Artistic Director of Taproot Theatre Company, describes *Barefoot in the Park* as a comedy that “drops us into the first breathless days of a marriage, when romance is high, patience is low, and every tiny problem feels like a test of destiny.” In this play, she notes, “love has to survive stairs, neighbors, in-laws, expectations, exhaustion, and the great marital question of whether two very different people can build a life without driving each other completely mad.” For Lund, the genre itself is part of the appeal: “I love romantic comedies because they let us laugh at the most serious thing we do: love. There is something irresistible about watching two people full of hope, confidence, and absolutely no idea what they are getting themselves into.” It's a story, she says, that captures “the whole human range: vulnerability, joy, sorrow, petty frustrations, and the just-plain-ridiculousness of trying to share a life with another person. Humans are funny—and we are especially funny when we are figuring out love.”

Harlequin's production of *Barefoot in the Park* is a co-production, or “co-pro,” with Taproot Theatre Company, which staged the show with the same direction and design elements May 13 - June 20, 2026 on their Jewell Mainstage, with a Seattle-based cast. In a co-pro, two theaters share a single production concept - direction, scenic design, costumes, and staging - allowing audiences in multiple cities to experience the same artistic vision while giving each company the opportunity to bring its own unique qualities to the piece. Olympia audiences are in for a treat with a star-studded cast of well-known local actors: Kate Anders and Christian Bolduc, who understudied the roles of Corie and Paul Bratter at Taproot, step into the leads for Harlequin's production. Real-life acting couple Russ and Kim Holm bring their chemistry to the stage as Victor Velasco and Corie's mother, Ethel Banks, and veteran Andy Gordon rounds out the cast as the Telephone Repair Man. Key members of the artistic team who designed the original Taproot production will bring their talents to Harlequin as well, adapting their designs for the new cast and location. From Taproot Theatre, Mark Lund returns as Scenic and Sound

Designer, Nanette Acosta returns as Costume Designer, and Joyce Degenfelder provides Wig Design. Harlequin veteran Mark Thomason rounds out the artistic team with Lighting Design.

Click here for publicity photos for the production:

<https://harlequinproductions.org/barefoot-in-the-park-publicity-photos/>

Click here for a link to the show page: <https://harlequinproductions.org/show/barefoot-in-the-park/>

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Production Information

WHAT: Harlequin Productions presents *Barefoot in the Park* by Neil Simon, a co-production with Taproot Theatre Company. Directed by Karen Lund; Associate Directed by Aaron Lamb.

WHEN: August 21 – September 6, 2026

WHERE: State Theater, 202 4th Ave East, Olympia, WA 98501

TICKETS: Available online at harlequinproductions.org, by phone at 360-786-0151, or in person 12–5:30 pm, Tuesday–Saturday at the State Theater Box Office.

General admission: \$49

Senior 60+/Military: \$47

Student/Youths Under 25: \$35

Rush Tickets (2 hours prior to showtime): \$24.50 General/\$5 Under 20

SPECIAL DATES FOR THE AUDIENCE:

Opening Night: Friday, August 21 at 7:30 pm

Pay-What-You-Choose: 3 performances TBA prior to Opening

Community Talkback: Sunday, August 23

Closed Captioning: Sunday, August 30

Closing: Sunday, September 6 at 2:00 pm

CATEGORY: Classic Romantic Comedy

AGE RECOMMENDATION: 11 and older

CAST:

Corie Bratter.....Kate Anders

Paul Bratter.....Christian Bolduc

Ethel Banks.....Kim Holm

Victor Velasco & Delivery Man...Russ Holm

Telephone Repair Man.....Andy Gordon

SELECT BIOS:

Karen Lund** (Director) is thrilled to be making her Harlequin directing debut. Karen is the Producing Artistic Director of Taproot Theatre Company in Seattle, WA where she has been on

staff for three decades. Taproot was voted the Seattle Times People's Choice Best of the Northwest for Theatre 2024, received the 2024 Gregory Award for Outstanding Performing Arts Organization, and the 2026 Seattle's Child Family Favorite Reader's Choice award for Day Camps/Classes: Performing Arts. Karen is an award-winning stage and film director with well over 100 productions to her credit. Recent directing work includes Taproot's Always Patsy Cline, Murder on the Links and Barefoot in the Park, as well as Brigadoon for Village Theatre in Issaquah and Everett, WA. Karen has directed theatres all across the country, is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Union (SDC), and a professional voiceover artist. Karen would like to thank her amazing family, Mark, Jake, and Hannah.

**The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union

"Barefoot in the Park" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

Harlequin Productions is a professional not-for-profit theater company in Olympia, WA. We seek to invigorate, educate, and empower our community and all people to feel more, think more, play more, and judge less through the mirror of real live theatre.
