## Four strong women featured in THT's 'The Revolutionists'

By Sophie Braccini



From left: Sarah Mitchell and Kimberly Ridgeway in "The Revolutionists" at Town Hall Theatre. Photos Jay Yamada

- when a woman was still considered a second-class citizen, and Gunderson chose to give a glimpse because of it. of the life of four remarkable women of that time, and for us to ponder served a play of her own to pay what fighting for women's rights really meant when one's life was on the line.

The four very different women on stage try in their own way to transcend the predicament of their sex and attempt to effect change in a meaningful way during this tumultuous time.

The four characters are Mariefree slaves. The play is not necessarily a history lesson, though the historical facts cited in the play are correct. Gunderson does not necessarily spend her time detailing who these four women were and what band, King Louis XVI. motivated them. What she presents is more a silhouette of who they were. Dressed in the accouterment of the period, the four women use contemporary language – including do a lot for the farcical aspect of

playwright herself and she wants moments of humor. She noted that to write something important about the writer was the most produced the events that are unfolding around playwright in America in 2017; her. She articulates the problematic Gunderson was also the winner that interlaces the whole play, is art of the Lanford Wilson Award, the necessary and meaningful when Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award history runs amok? Is writing plays and the Otis Guernsey New Voices something more than a distraction Award. This production of "The for the rich? Corday and Angelle Revolutionists" in Lafayette is a are action heroes, yet they seek the Bay Area premiere. writer, because, in their own words if a story is not written, if words the play will continue at Town Hall are not put behind it, then the story cannot endure, it does not exist.

rector Susan Evans hold their parts stay after the presentation to talk with passion. Heather Kellogg as with the cast and director, are also Charlotte Corday, "the angel of scheduled. For information, visit assassin" is full of fire and conviction, Sarah Mitchell as Olympe de

It was an especially hard time for Gouges wavers from passionate women in revolutionary France to being full of doubts, Kimberly Ridgeway as Marianne Angelle is a survivor and a fighter, Suzie Shepacould still be beheaded for her po- rd as Marie-Antoinette is moving litical opinions. Playwright Lauren despite her foolishness, or maybe

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De Gouges would have detribute to her extraordinary courage and endeavors. She wrote, "A woman has the right to mount the scaffold. She must possess equally the right to mount the speaker's platform." Because she opposed the most extreme of revolutionaries she was executed in November 1793. Corday was an educated young girl living in the countryside Antoinette, former queen of France, who dreamed of republic and free-Charlotte Corday, political activist dom for all. When extremists enand assassin, Olympe de Gouges, tered the French revolution, terrorplaywright and writer of the bill izing and killing their opponents, of writes of women, and Marianne she decided that the one journalist Angelle, a fictional black woman that had inflamed passions through from the Caribbean who fights to his fanatical writing had to die so all could be saved. She knew she would die for her action and she was executed in July 1793. Marie Antoinette was executed in October 1793, 10 months after her hus-

Director Susan Evans, also artistic director at Town Hall Theatre, explains that she was able to gather an entirely female crew, including all the production team, to produce profanity, and body language that this play. She chose the play because she found Gunderson's text to be very relevant to our time, The character de Gouges is a and a poignant drama, with many

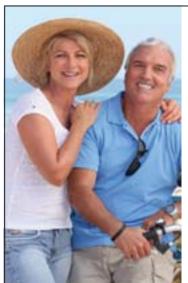
Opening night was Sept. 29 and Theater through Oct. 20. Different events, such as Theater Club nights The four women chosen by di- when patrons are encouraged to www.townhalltheatre.com.



From left: Sarah Mitchell, Suzie Shepard, Kimberly Ridgeway and Heather Kellogg in "The Revolutionists" at Town Hall Theatre.

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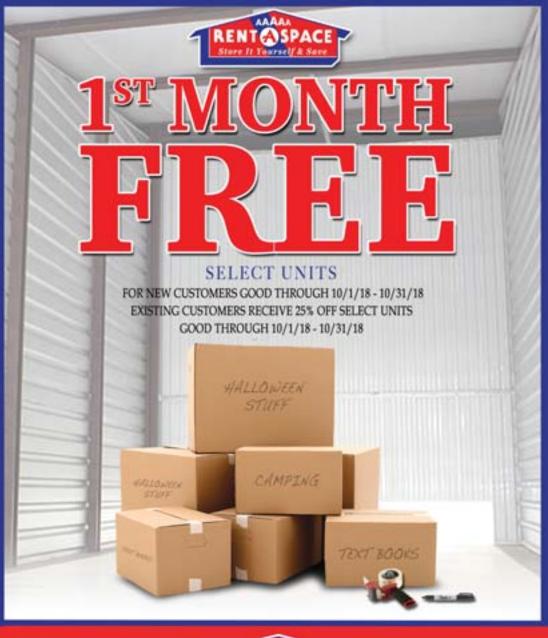


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