

# Kennedy Theatre

---

UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I at MĀNOA

Department of Theatre and Dance  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
1770 East-West Road  
Honolulu, HI 96822  
Website: [hawaii.edu/kennedy](http://hawaii.edu/kennedy)  
Online Press Resources: [hawaii.edu/kennedy](http://hawaii.edu/kennedy)

Contact: Matthew Kelty  
Director of Publicity  
Email: [ktpub@hawaii.edu](mailto:ktpub@hawaii.edu)  
Phone: (808) 956-2598  
Fax: (808) 956-4234  
Box Office: (808) 956-7655



## Media Release • 2013-2014 Season

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 18, 2014

### Furry Orange Gappers Invade the Kennedy Stage

*“The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip” Combines Singing, Puppetry, and Humor*

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Department of Theatre and Dance is proud to present “The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip” as the final mainstage show of its 50th Anniversary season. Performances will take place Apr. 11, 12, 18, and 19 at 7:30 p.m., and Apr. 20 at 2 p.m. Audiences will also have the opportunity to attend free pre-show chats at 6:30 p.m. on Apr. 12 and 19. Subject to availability, UHM students with a validated Spring 2014 ID will be able to take advantage of the theatre's buy-one-get-one-free program on Fri., Apr. 18. Patrons who attend on Apr. 11 are also invited to join the cast and director – as well as faculty from the Department of Theatre and Dance – for a post-show reception on the theatre's lanai in celebration of Kennedy's 50th Anniversary. As a special treat on Sun., Apr. 20, an Easter Egg Hunt will be offered for young audience members after the show.

“Gappers” director Mark Branner jumped into production this Spring, after having spent a semester teaching in London. He's also kept himself busy here on O'ahu: in addition to directing “Gappers,” he is currently working with the theatre company Monkey Waterfall to create the new piece “Twelve Angry Monkeys.” He's also preparing to direct a Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA)

show about Eddie Aikau at the Hawai‘i Theatre Center this fall. “It’s a great privilege to work on so many unique and creative projects,” says Branner. “The best TYA can be enjoyed by audiences of all ages — and these projects all fulfill that high goal. ‘Gappers’ is not just a ‘kid’s show’; it has something for everyone.”

“The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip” is Kennedy Theatre’s annual TYA production. This musical’s book and lyrics were written by Doug Cooney, with music by David O.; it is adapted from the young readers novel by George Saunders. Saunders is more widely known for his award-winning adult fiction, but “Gappers of Frip” has also been highly praised; at the time of the book’s release, “Entertainment Weekly” declared that, “In a perfect world, every child would own a copy of this profound, funny fable about ... how the world is versus how it ought to be.”

“Gappers” tells the story of the smart and hard-working girl Capable (Amy Johnson, seen last fall in Kennedy Theatre’s *The Wild Party*), her recently-widowed father (Johnny Reed, recently seen in Diamond Head Theatre’s *Stepping Out*), and her neighbors in the village of Frip. This musical features rich and charming melodies, and accompaniment by a toy piano; Richard Bragdon (one of the musical directors for “The Wild Party”), is musical director and pianist for the production. The show also features dozens of gappers: small orange sea creatures that love (and terrify) the villagers’ goats. Teryl Garcia, a TYA student who specializes in puppetry, has been in charge of creating the play’s goats and gappers as part of her MFA thesis.

The children of Frip spend their days combing the gappers from the goats, and returning them to the sea. But one day, the gappers begin to converge only on Capable’s goats, and the young woman must decide whether to ask her neighbors for help, do all the work herself, or give up on goats and her family’s livelihood altogether. The villagers’ choices, and the ways that they treat each other, weave together to tell a story of hard work, hard decisions, unneighborly behavior, and – ultimately – forgiveness. The production combines singing, puppetry, humor, and some quick-changing double-cast

actors (Timothy Callais, making his Kennedy Theatre debut, will play both Sid and Carol Ronsen).

Branner is asking a lot of the show's performers, designers, and crew; but he knows that his students and colleagues are up to the task: “We have so many first-rate people working on this show. From the acting and the puppets to the set, lights, and costumes, it's a collaborative effort that shows the strength and depth of our TYA program here at Mānoa.”

Tickets for “The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip” are available at the Kennedy Theatre box office; the box office is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday, with extended hours on performance dates. Tickets may also be purchased online 24/7 at [etickethawaii.com](http://etickethawaii.com), by phone at (808) 944-2697, and at participating outlets. Prices are \$20 general admission; \$18 seniors / military / UH faculty and staff; \$15 UHAA members; \$13 college students; \$10 children aged 2 through 17, and \$5 UHM students with validated Spring 2014 UHM photo ID. Ticket prices include all service fees. Discount rates are available for groups of 10 or more. For further information, please visit the department's website at [hawaii.edu/kennedy](http://hawaii.edu/kennedy), or call the theatre at (808) 956-7655. For disability access, please call the theatre.

---

**EVENT:** “The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip”

**PRESENTED BY:** UHM Department of Theatre and Dance

**WHEN:** Apr. 11, 12\*, 18, and 19\* at 7:30 p.m.  
Apr. 20 at 2 p.m.  
\* Free pre-show chat at 6:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** UHM's Kennedy Theatre Mainstage  
1770 East-West Road, Honolulu

**TICKET PRICES:** \$20 general admission  
\$18 seniors / military / UH Faculty and staff  
\$15 UHAA members  
\$13 students  
\$10 children ages 2 through 17  
\$5 UHM students with validated Spring 2014 UHM photo ID  
Ticket prices include all service fees.

**PURCHASE INFO:** Tickets are available at the Kennedy Theatre box office; the box office is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday, with extended hours on performance dates. Tickets may also be purchased online at [etickethawaii.com](http://etickethawaii.com), by phone at (808) 944-2697, and at participating outlets.

