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## ENTERTAINMENT &amp; ARTS

## Center Theatre Group's 2025-26 season: David Byrne's 'Here Lies Love,' 'Paranormal Activity' and more



Bisserat Tseggai, left, and Mia Ellis in "JaJa's African Hair Braiding." (T. Charles Erickson)

**By Los Angeles Times staff**

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The Imelda Marcos bio-musical "Here Lies Love" injects some disco shimmer to the Center Theatre Group 2025-26 season announced Tuesday.

The company behind the Ahmanson Theatre and Mark Taper Forum in downtown L.A. and the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City released a lineup that also includes the Jocelyn Bioh play “Jaja’s African Hair Braiding”; Eboni Booth’s new play “Primary Trust”; a stage riff on the “Paranormal Activity” movies; the musical “& Juliet” and a 25th anniversary revival of “Mamma Mia!”

“Here Lies Love,” featuring music by David Byrne and Fatboy Slim, and lyrics by Byrne, made history as Broadway’s first musical with an all-Filipino cast. The production earned 2024 Tony nominations for score, sound design, scene design and choreography as well as praise from critics including the New York Times’ Jesse Green, who applauded the [”infernally catchy songs.”](#)

The musical also faced criticism for [historical distortion](#) and what some saw as the [underplaying](#) of corruption, censorship and violent political oppression in the Philippines during the Marcos regime. The musical has been updated since its 2013 Off-Broadway premiere at the Public Theater to emphasize the People Power Revolution that spurred the end of the Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos era.

In New York, producers transformed the Broadway Theater to evoke Studio 54. Center Theatre Group will present “Here Lies Love” in the Taper in a run scheduled to open Feb. 11. Snehal Desai, CTG’s artistic director, will helm the production.

The comedy “Jaja’s African Hair Braiding” earned Tony nominations last year for best play, direction, scenic design and sound design, and Dede Ayite won the award for her costumes. Set in Harlem, Bioh’s play centers on a community of West African immigrants who “confront the challenges of being outsiders in their own neighborhood.”

Whitney White will direct a co-production with La Jolla Playhouse, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theater and Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. It opens at the Taper on Oct. 1.

Booth's "Primary Trust" was the 2024 Pulitzer Prize winner for drama. The [Pulitzer citation](#) called it "a simple and elegantly crafted story of an emotionally damaged man who finds a new job, new friends and a new sense of worth, illustrating how small acts of kindness can change a person's life and enrich an entire community."



Caleb Eberhardt in La Jolla Playhouse's West Coast-premiere production of "Primary Trust" last year. (Rich Soublett II)

After seeing the play's West Coast premiere at La Jolla Playhouse last year, Times theater critic [Charles McNulty wrote](#): "This is a quirky, small-scale, quietly reflective work that's as tenderhearted as it is spryly comic and as poignant as it is ultimately uplifting.

"It's refreshing to see such a prodigious honor bestowed on a piece of writing that's content to go about its human business without the need to inflate its own importance."

Knud Adams will direct the Taper production, which opens in May 2026.

Here are the six major productions in the 2025-26 CTG schedule (in chronological order) announced by Desai, managing director and chief executive Meghan Pressman and producing director Douglas C. Baker. A seventh production will be announced at a later date.

**“& Juliet”**

Book by David West Read

Music by Max Martin & Friends

Directed By Luke Sheppard

Ahmanson Theatre

Aug. 13-Sept. 7

**“Jaja’s African Hair Braiding”**

Mark Taper Forum

Oct. 1-Nov. 9

**“Paranormal Activity”**

Based on the “Paranormal Activity” films from Blumhouse and Solana Films, adapted here by arrangement with Paramount Pictures and Melting Pot

Written by Levi Holloway

Directed by Felix Barrett

Co-production with American Conservatory Theater of San Francisco, Chicago Shakespeare Theater and Shakespeare Theatre Company of Washington, D.C.

Ahmanson Theatre

Nov. 13-Dec. 7

**“Here Lies Love”**

Mark Taper Forum

Feb. 11-March 22

## “Primary Trust”

Mark Taper Forum

May 20-June 28, 2026

## “Mamma Mia!”

Music and lyrics by Benny Andersson & Björn Ulvaeus

Book by Catherine Johnson

Directed by Phyllida Lloyd

Ahmanson Theatre

June 23-July 19, 2026

The company’s “CTG:FWD” programming includes three shows at the Kirk Douglas: “Puppet Up! — Uncensored,” an audience-driven affair featuring creations from the Jim Henson Co., running July 16-27; “Guac,” writer and star Manuel Oliver’s one-man show, from the father of a son who was killed in the 2018 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., running Oct. 14-Nov. 2; and “The Enormous Crocodile,” a musical based on the work of Roald Dahl, Dec. 5-Jan. 4. “Like It Like Harlem,” a production in partnership with [Muse/iQue](#), is scheduled for Aug. 8-10 at the Taper.

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