

MATT AUGUST

DIRECTOR



Contact
The Gersh Agency
Jessica Amato
(212) 997-1818

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Produced by Pioneer Theatre Company- 2014
Designers: Jim Noone (S), Caitlin Ward (C), Paul Miller (L)



DESERET NEWS

“PTC’s ‘Much Ado About Nothing’ is so effervescent and infectious enjoyable that it very nearly snaps, crackles and pops.”

“The company illuminates Shakespeare’s brilliant comedic repartee while commendably balancing the more serious reflections on honor and shame.”

“...As he envisioned, the immensely talented Matt August has made Shakespeare cool. Through his sprightly directing, the audience is easily engaged in the story.”

“...the acting is universally strong. Both Shakespeare veterans and amateurs will delight in this expert PTC production.”

SALT LAKE MAGAZINE

“Even if you’re intimately familiar with MUCH ADO, there is plenty to love in this creative adaptation by director Matt August, from several excellent performances and new twists on old dialogue, to the stunning set design and costumes.”

“...August’s gamble on placing his MUCH ADO in the Middle Ages pays off. For both audience and performers, the twist makes the show feel new.”

CITY WEEKLY

“Matt August’s direction of Much Ado offers a reminder that [Shakespeare productions] can provide be a rich playground for slapstick.”

“The [gulling] scenes are hilariously staged...Smith and Watson may be even better when tying their bodies into knots as Beatrice and Benedick try to convince themselves they’re not falling in love. Throw in the inept constable Dogberry and his “watch” composed of children, and this MUCH ADO feels as much like giddily choreographed silent-screen humor as it does highbrow *thee-ay-tuh*.”



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS
JEFFERSON, CHARLES DICKENS AND COUNT LEO
TOLSOY: DISCORD

Produced by NoHo Arts Center, Efficiency Studios, with support from HBO
Cast: Armin Shimerman, Larry Cedar, David Melville
*2014 Ovation Recommended



LOS ANGELES TIMES: CRITIC'S CHOICE

"Imagine the dramaturgical love-child of "Steve Allen's Meeting of Minds" and Jean-Paul Sartre's "No Exit". "Carefully compiled references and biographical details whiz by in **Matt August's finely tuned staging, with superb performances** illuminating the clashing personalities that drive three discordant takes on Christianity."

L.A. EXAMINER

"Directed by **Matt August, this thought provoking, very funny and engaging play is a philosophical marvel.** As the response of an appreciative opening night audience demonstrated, this show offers a stimulating and satisfying evening of theatre."

"...While this play involves heavy discourse, it also offers many moments of laugh-out-loud humor. Aficionados of Jefferson, Dickens and/or Tolstoy will find much to delight them and anyone who enjoys a lively philosophical discussion is in for a treat. Audiences are not likely to find a more literate and thought-povoking production playin in the LA area. Go!"

L.A. WEEKLY

"The play is a brainy, sitcom spin on Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit*. The room is stark white though the video projections of text and images bouncing across the walls provide director Matt August with the intellectually buoyant tone he seeks."

BITTER LEMONS
100% Sweet!



TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

Produced by The Old Globe, San Diego CA



LOS ANGELES TIMES: “Best Of the Year: Top Ten List”

by Charles McNulty

One of Shakespeare's lesser comedies was given a lusciously loopy outdoor staging by the inexhaustibly inventive Matt August.”

LOS ANGELES TIMES REVIEW

by Charles McNulty

“The most unexpected delight of the festival was Matt August's effervescent and impressively lucid staging of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona." ...August elicits sterling performances from his four young leads.”

THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

“The Old Globe has at least one unqualified success at this year’s Shakespeare Festival: director Matt August’s imaginative and playful production of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona. August has some fun appropriating a wild amalgam of styles and periods in this freewheeling staging, and the result makes sense for this imperfect script.”
“August’s visual palette is wide-ranging...and gets terrific performances from his actors, particularly the young leads.”

“August, more than either of the other festival directors, has taken advantage of his company’s various skills and given them the best directorial concept to work with... He lets the play shine through, in all its flawed yet charming glory. 'Two Gentlemen' is one good comedy. “

SAN DIEGO READER

“At the Old Globe's outdoor stage, Matt August looks as if he's burned for the assignment. He countrifies Verona, where cows moo, even in town, and makes the four young leads like middle-school innocents: Proteus and Julia aren't in love; they're omagod-headoverheels! Everything in their innocent, most likely virginal lives promises to remain unconditional forever.”

NORTH COUNTY TIMES

“Director Matt August's interpretation of Shakespeare's "Two Gentlemen of Verona" has everything you'd want from the romantic comedy.”

“August's ‘Two Gentlemen’ is fun and entertaining, and he brings crystal clarity to the wealth of witty wordplay and puns in the script.”

“August captures the flowering of youth and endless possibilities in the play.”

IN THE HEIGHTS

Produced by Pioneer Theatre Company- Regional Premier

***WINNER- Audience Choice Award**



Pioneer Theatre Company's IN THE HEIGHTS is Not to Be Missed

Pioneer Theatre Company's regional premiere of **In the Heights** could easily be the **greatest night of theatre you'll experience in Utah this year.** The well-crafted story and music, combined with the electric performances and incredible design, make it not to be missed!

The Salt Lake Tribune

Pioneer's Regional premiere SIZZLES

...at the show's effervescent core are the neighborhood song-and-dance numbers where **the energy threatens to erupt off the stage.** **Matt August's integrated direction** and Bob Richard's choreography combine to set off the well-matched performance.

...In revealing how universal their dreams and struggles are, "In the Heights" creates a community with its audience that transcends ethnic and economic differences, a solidarity verified by its enthusiastic reception on opening night.

CITY WEEKLY- Pick of the Week

"Heart" is the operative word for the entire production. The solid story told by excellent performers with boundless energy makes for a great show. Do yourself a favor and head uptown to el barrio.



THE FOURTH MESSENGER

World Premier Musical by Vienna Teng and Tanya Shaffer
Produced by 100 Shades of Green, Ashby Stage, Berkeley CA



SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE



“The Fourth Messenger: Enlightened”

“An exciting and ambitious project, driven by Teng's eclectic score, Shaffer's inspired rewrites of the Buddha story, and their punchy, provocative lyrics...Hilarious and moving production numbers... **imaginatively staged by Broadway’s Matt August**... An absolute delight.”

THE HUFFINGTON POST

“Intelligent and skillfully crafted...A hugely ambitious and refreshingly original musical that demands the attention of any serious theatergoer...**Above all, Fourth Messenger has been beautifully staged with grace, wit, and plenty of dramatic flair by Matt August who pulls exceptionally poignant performances from his two female leads**...Driven by Teng’s propulsive score, Shaffer's musical has the audience emotionally involved and on the edge of their seats...Teng is a fresh and exciting new theatrical talent with a distinctive voice of her own... Highly recommended.”

NPR

“Don’t Miss the Messenger at Ashby Stage”

“A satisfying and remarkably entertaining new musical that takes on spiritual life with wit and emotional resonance... **An impressively polished production helmed by Broadway director Matt August**... Funny and touching in all the right places...*[The Fourth Messenger]* seems sure to catch fire if the outside world gets a chance to hear it.”

THEATER DOGS

“Spirited New Messenger Really Delivers”

“The Fourth Messenger is a triumph...Beautiful, ambitious and with the kind of depth we’ve come *not* to expect from musicals...Compelling from beginning to end... Shaffer’s book brims with intelligence and wit and Teng’s music feels rich in original ways, full of melody and intricacy... **A smart producer will see the potential in this show – so abundantly displayed in this production – and help take it to the next level**. It’s time for *The Fourth Messenger* to...share its own nirvana with a much wider audience.”

LIBERTY SMITH- A NEW MUSICAL

Produced by Ford's Theatre

***Nominated for 6 HELEN HAYES AWARDS:**

Best Direction - Best Ensemble - Best Actor - Best Actress

Best Music Direction - Best Production



THE WASHINGTON POST- Recommended

“Staged with a slick sheen by director Matt August and choreographer Denis Jones, “Liberty Smith” is sunny and well sung- very Disney.”

METRO WEEKLY- Recommended

“Irrepressible...a superb cast of actors! If you simply want to be entertained and revel in gloriously anthemic music and a Broadway-caliber cast and set design, *Liberty Smith* is your ticket to ride. ...The whole production team deserves praise for their work and **Director Matt August does yeoman's work in keeping everything running smoothly.”**

WASHINGTON EXAMINER - Recommended

“Directed by Matt August, “Liberty Smith” has a lot to do with love. It's a clever historical tribute to everyman and a feast for the eyes.”

DC THEATER SCENE -Recommended

“The world premiere *Liberty Smith* so succeeds in the Disney genre that...the creators have all **but nailed an animated musical mega-hit. How else to explain the “romp” through history on a stage which was so **dazzlingly chaotic** that it could only have been surpassed by the romp backstage of costume changes.... **Matt August ably managed to anchor this rollicking work with a concept that could easily transfer the action from land to ship to European court and back to the newly established America.**”**



HOW THE GRINCH STOLE CHRISTMAS- THE MUSICAL

Based on the Old Globe Production created by Jack O'Brien

Directed by Matt August:

Broadway: Hilton Theatre 2006, St. James Theatre 2007

Los Angeles: Pantages 2009

National Tours 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

Madison Square Garden, NYC 2012



“AN EXTRAORDINARY PERFORMANCE! 100 times better than any bedside story.” – *New York Times*

“THE MOST LOVEABLE CHRISTMAS VILLAIN OF THEM ALL! This Grinch brings the Dr. Seuss classic fancifully to life - you might find your heart growing a few sizes, too.” – *Associated Press*

“STEFAN KARL IS A GRINCH FOR THE AGES AT THE PANTAGES! The Whos, of course, are all marvelous dancers and clowns; their choreography is delightful, **and the direction of all the goings-on is brilliant.**” – *Hollywood Reporter*

“AN AWESOME FIRST BROADWAY MUSICAL FOR KIDS A bright, tuneful, neatly packaged expansion of the book.” – *The Record*

“A TASTY MORSEL OF A SHOW! EYE-CANDY APLENTY! – *NY Daily News*

“THE GRINCH'S TRIUMPH IS DEFINITELY BROADWAY'S GAIN. The spectacle warms the hearts of everybody.” – *The Journal News*

“In heart, soul and pure entertainment, THE GRINCH HAS WICKED AND YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN BEAT!” – *Talkin' Broadway*

“A PERFECT HOLIDAY OUTING FOR THE FAMILY Patrick Page is such a hilarious meanie in the reinvigorated Broadway show” – *The News-Times*

“Infused with the spirit of Seuss – IT'S A NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITION”

– *Philadelphia Inquirer*

BABY TAJ

World Premier

Produced by TheatreWorks, Palo Alto, CA

*** Winner- Bay Area Critics Award for Best Costume Design**

**** Nomination- Bay Area Critics Awards for Best Play, Best Scenic Design, Best Choreography and Best Original Score**



Year End Top 10 Lists

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE- YEAR IN REVIEW- TOP 10 LIST

"Baby Taj" TheatreWorks- A captivating inquiry into love and freedom, **staged with inventive eclecticism by Matt August**, Tanya Shaffer's new play about potential single motherhood and the Taj Mahal thrives on a witty, probing clash between freethinking modernity and tradition.

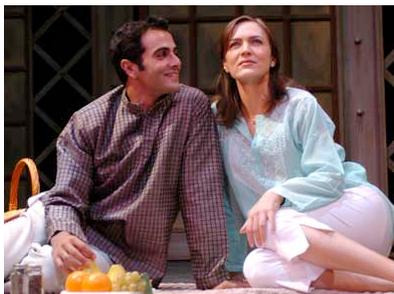
SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

10 BEST THINGS ON AREA'S STAGES FROM DICKENS TO BOLLYWOOD

• Biggest Laughs: ``Baby Taj''- Yuk it up, Bollywood-style.

OKLAND TRIBUNE/INSIDE BAY AREA- TOPS OF THE YEAR

"Baby Taj," TheatreWorks — After the huge success of her one-woman show, Berkeley writer Tanya Shaffer proved she has more than the right stuff to create a full-blown play with this vibrant tale of a 30-something woman wrestling with her desire to have a baby and her need to escape responsibility. **A gorgeous, fanciful production from director Matt August and designers Joe Ragey and Fumiko Bielefeldt couldn't overwhelm heartfelt performances.**



BABY TAJ Reviews

SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE



Most of all, it's a captivating inquiry into love -- free, formally arranged, erotic, problematic, friendly, familial and especially maternal -- **staged with inventive eclecticism by Matt August in his TheatreWorks debut....August segues deftly between a bright array of styles, mixing in bits of Bollywood romance, kathakali and beautifully designed shadow puppetry, to the invigorating sitar, tabla and flute score** by composer Rama. Visions of the Taj Mahal are captivatingly suggested by the ornate flying gateways and fabric towers of Joe Ragey's multi-layered set, impressively lit by Pamila Gray. Fumiko Bielefeldt adorns the cast in a resplendent array of American and Indian costumes.

SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

CULTURAL FLIRTATIONS- 'BABY TAJ' IS A SIZZLING COMEDY

Huzzah! TheatreWorks gave birth over the weekend to ``Baby Taj," a new play about India, and it's a bundle of cross-cultural joy...It's all sort of like ``Everybody Loves Raymond," only with chai. In fact, it might all seem a little too sitcom-y if the domestic warfare wasn't so funny and the culture clashes weren't so on target... Fera and Younis etch each scene with a clarity that keeps the courtship from cloying, a refreshing departure for the romantic comedy genre...**August's staging of the yuk-it-up artificial insemination scene -- involving a turkey baster, an annoyed lesbian and a peasant skirt -- crackles with borscht-belt comic timing.**

METRO ACTIVE

La Taj aux Folles

The script is clean and lean, and director Matt August has tuned it to just the right combination of warmth, humanity and humor....August has led TheatreWorks' top-notch production team to outdo itself in Baby Taj. All the visual elements maintain the ornate essence of Indian design with rich Persian influence, right down to a rosette-textured backdrop scrim. Detailed scrolls and swirls and florals characterize Fumiko Bielefeldt's copious, amazing historic costumes for each enacted legend. Legends are narrated as masques, or as elaborate shadow puppet shows. And the cobra costume is a mechanical feat as well as beautiful.



CHRISTMAS CAROL

Produced by Ford's Theatre, Washington DC
2004-2008



CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Ford's conjures up fantastical ghost story

To my immense astonishment—leaving Dickens and his story perfectly intact – director August has created a “Christmas Carol” as different from everything else I’ve seen as the Starship Enterprise is from all the airliners at O’Hare.

WASHINGTON THEATRE

You’ll recognize the famous opening line of Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* in **Ford’s Theatre’s rousing new production of the holiday classic**, but you might be surprised by who delivers the matter-of-fact news about old Jacob Marley. By Dickens, it’s the author himself, in waistcoat and pantaloons, addressing us from a podium with his manuscript in hand. We’re being treated to a public reading of *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas* as it might have occurred when Dickens visited Washington in 1868.

...**Director Matt August takes us on a journey through Dickens’ imagination, where the real and the fantastical intersect:** Dickens transforms himself into Scrooge, street hawkers morph into the Christmas ghosts, and Marley haunts Scrooge’s conscience long before we hear or see his chains. ...**August’s production is clever, visually impressive, and very true to the spirit of the author himself**, who often acted out scenes from his novels as he wrote them. In addition, Martin Rayner gives a bravura performance as Dickens/Scrooge, bringing a classical elegance and self-possession to the famous author (whom he resembles) and a hard-edged but sympathetic core to the old miser on the verge of redemption.

This production (part of Ford’s push to become a major producing theater in Washington) really isn’t to be missed by any who, in the author’s own words, wish “to keep Christmas well.” ...**August and Rayner make the humor sparkle as an inevitable part of Scrooge’s self-discovery. Who knew the old geezer had it in him?**

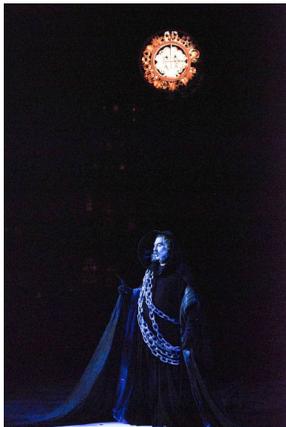
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WASHINGTON POST

Who knew that Ebenezer Scrooge was a would-be artist? The folks at Ford's Theatre did: Their new production of "A Christmas Carol" casts Charles Dickens's tale as a voyage through Scrooge's imagination and memory, and the vistas along the way can verge on the surreal.

A huge safe tumbles from the sky at one point in this "Carol," directed by Matt August, with original sets and costumes by G.W. Mercier and Fabio Toblini. In another scene, a harlequin capers through a yuletide revel, in the company of guests wearing pirate hats. A rakish fruit seller morphs into the Ghost of Christmas Present, and subsequently lets Scrooge's nephew [Fred] decorate him as if he were a fir tree. **This Scrooge may have spent decades scrutinizing ledgers and quipping, "Bah, humbug," but when he dreams himself into a life transformation, you have to admit he does it with flair.** Just as enchanting in Ford's production is Martin Rayner's performance in the lead role. With his fierce energy and marvelous voice, Rayner gives Scrooge layers of intelligence and emotion; Rayner also plays Dickens reading aloud, and the actor's delivery showcases the classic prose to great effect.

Director August and the designers give the production a look that's bold and crisp Mercier evokes rooms with just an article or two of furniture an unnaturally high desk and a pile of safes (in lieu of a chair) create Scrooge's office, for instance.



PIG FARM

Co-World Premier

Produced by The Old Globe, San Diego CA



VARIETY

A Looney Tunes extravaganza of pork and passion on the plains receiving a nifty production on the Old Globe's smaller arena stage.

Helmer Matt August keeps tongues firmly out of cheek and elicits a remarkable amount of variety within the hard-bitten style.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Matt August's deftly acted production, billed as the "co-world premiere," wrings as much hilarity out of the script as possible....It's broad, playful and eager to tickle more than provoke. How funny you'll find it will depend on your taste for tastelessness. I laughed quite a bit. As a roll in the theatrical mud, it could hardly be more amusingly pulled off.

SANDIEGO.COM

Thank you, Old Globe, for "Pig Farm," the funniest two hours of theatre the city has had in many an opening night. ...Kotis has provided a tough, sturdy, kick-ass script that lets pros like director Matt August and his four actors really shine.

SAN DIEGO READER

Director Matt August and fight director Steve Rankin turn the Carter into a manic steeplechase of slapstick, pratfalls, and physical comedy as hilarious as it is dangerous to perform. "Comic intensity" should be an oxymoron, since the rule with comedies is usually the lighter the better. But the terrific ensemble cast performs *Pig Farm* with such comic intensity they make minutely choreographed steps appear completely spontaneous.



TIME FLIES

Produced by The Old Globe, San Diego CA



VARIETY

It's said time flies when you're having fun, and the fun quotient is sky-high in David Ives' sextet of comic plays at the Old Globe. Moving from anthropomorphic mayflies to British detectives and inept biblical construction workers, the author maintains a warped, witty tone, and even manages to humanize some of his screwball protagonists.

Director Matt August and a peerless cast capture the distinctive notes in Ives' literary voice.

SAN DIEGO UNION TRIBUNE

In director Matt August's production of "Time Flies," which opened Saturday at the Globe's Cassius Carter Centre Stage, the tone is spot-on. Actors Mark Setlock as the virile and baffled guy-fly and Mia Barron as the buzzing gal do come to terms with a 24-hour fate in which foreplay segues swiftly into funerals. "Talk about a quickie," May whines before a meltdown.

NORTH COUNTY TIMES:

Matt August's direction keeps that delicate balance intact, providing just enough laughs to counter the provoking philosophical discussion inside the text. A first-class cast, sharp direction and excellent production work, this is a production that everyone will agree is time well spent.



SIXTEEN WOUNDED

Produced by Long Wharf Theatre, New Haven CT
Staring *Martin Landau* and *Omar Metwalli*



HARTFORD COURANT

In its incendiary world-premiere production, in its burning timelessness “Sixteen Wounded” sends its two adversaries through changes of temperament and temperature, directed by Matt August with a fine sense of balance.

NEW HAVEN REGISTER

Deftly directed by Matt August “Sixteen Wounded” receives an elaborate production.

NEW YORK TIMES

SOME plays have the power to provoke. "Sixteen Wounded," at the Long Wharf Theater's Stage II, may well stun you into silence...Matt August's direction of a cast of nine skillfully camouflages the playwright's imperfect construction, in particular, the add-on sense of the play's final scenes.

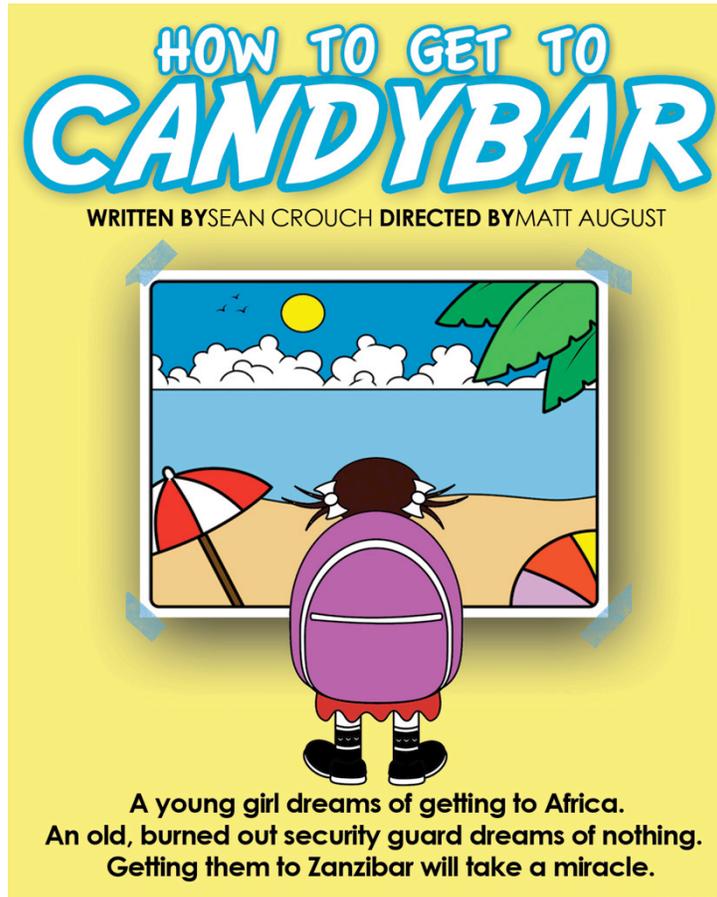
Mr. Landau builds from quiet resignation to explosive revelation of Hans' horrific past and present aloneness. Omar Metwally, whose intensity sears through every corner of the theater, is dazzling, commanding the resources to hold in the ache of Mahmude's life, while giving himself truthfully to the freeing possibilities of a new one.

Photos from the Cherry Lane Production:



HOW TO GET TO CANDYBAR

Short Film



Winner Best Comedy: Cape Fear Film Festival
Winner Best Comedy: Dragon Con Film Festival





The Return (Hopefully) of Magical Realism

“...I attended the Manhattan Film Festival last week and watched a delightful short called ‘How to Get to Candybar.’ It’s about three young kids who decide to fly to Africa, only to have their way blocked by a gruff airport security guard. Over the course of the film, the hope and imagination of the kids softens the gruff man until he realizes that it’s okay to dream again.

This film is a joy. The acting of the kids is precious, the nasty man is overdone just enough to be humorous, and for a low budget film shot in four days (four days!) the production quality is spectacular. I won’t give away the magical realism elements of it, but I find this technique to be the reason why films should be made. As Brian Selznick says in his book, ‘Hugo’ ... **“Film didn’t have to reflect real life...film had the power to capture dreams.”** I guess one would expect as much from Matt August, the director of Broadway’s ‘How the Grinch Stole Christmas’.

I spoke with the writer, Sean Crouch of tv’s NUMB3RS, and his hope is to turn this story into a feature film. **If the audience reaction to this “feel good fantasy movie” is any indication, it should be a roaring success.** Keep up the good work guys, and keep that magical realism coming! “



www.candybarthemovie.com