



Best in Show: May

Our top must-see theater events this month, from 'Brits Off-Broadway' to 'Saved'

By Aaron Leichter
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The month of May sees more oddball dramas than both March and April did. Maybe it's because theaters aren't vying for awards anymore. Or maybe they need to entice audiences into seats during the warm spring evenings. Or maybe spring fever has driven their artistic departments a little batty. Whatever the reason, there's something a little wacky going on in all of the month's top picks.

April 30

OK, so it started on the last day of April. But let's cut some slack to ["Port Authority,"](#) the latest monologue drama by Conor McPherson: His last play ("The Seafarer") closed over a month ago! Shunning Broadway, his melancholy three-hander about love and loneliness comes to the [Atlantic Theater Company](#) instead.

May 6

In May and June, [59E59](#) is hosting [Brits Off-Broadway](#), a series that proves British drama doesn't end with Tom Stoppard. ["Damascus"](#) stands out from the remarkable repertory. It's produced by the estimable Traverse Company, and written by David Greig, a Scot with remarkable insight into global politics and the pitfalls of translation.

For Edward Albee, May means another month, another

Gotham production. [The Signature Theater's](#) production of ["Occupant"](#) hasn't even opened, but it's already extended through July. But there's a good reason: Mercedes Reuhl stars, and she's always a stellar interpreter of Albee's tough women.

May 7

David Greenspan's risk-loving ferocity and his sheer weirdness may mesh well with Aristophanes, theater's original dyspeptic satirist—or it may combust. Either way, the irreverent ["Old Comedy from Aristophanes' Frogs"](#) (a co-production by [Classic Stage Company](#) and Target Margin) sounds irresistible.

May 9

These days, the best song-and-dance shows appear Off-Broadway before they move to Times Square. So see ["Saved"](#) before the move, not after. [Playwrights Horizons'](#) musical is adapted from the hilarious 2004 satire starring Mandy Moore about teen sexuality at a Christian high school, and features a girl who has a vision of Jesus.

May 13

The 2007-08 season has been a banner one for young playwrights. Bringing up the rear is ["Len, Asleep in Vinyl,"](#) Carly Mensch's drama about pop music and dropping out. It appears at the [Second Stage Upstairs](#), a series with good track record for showcasing tomorrow's finest writers as they take their first steps.

May 14

[Manhattan Class Company](#) has been home to the infamous Neil LaBute for several seasons now, giving him a stage to provoke audiences with his weird views on sex and beauty. Skinny starlets Piper Perabo and Alison Pill play opposite talented-but-shaggy Thomas Sadowski and Pablo Schreiber in his latest work, ["reasons to be pretty,"](#) which is guaranteed to piss someone off.

Photo: Khalid Laith in "Damascus," part of 59E59's "Brits Off-Broadway" festival/Alan McCredie