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CITY THEATRE ANNOUNCES DIGITAL SPRING SEASON

*The spring season features local artists and partnerships
with national companies.*

Pittsburgh, PA (March 10, 2021): City Theatre is pleased to announce its virtual spring season.

Like almost all performing arts organizations, City Theatre was forced to halt live performances on March 12, 2020 due to the Covid-19 national crisis. Its modified 46th season began in September with a reimagined line-up of shows, including the creation of a live, outdoor drive-in theatrical experience at Hazelwood Green. Over the course of seven weeks, City Theatre presented 11 local organizations and groups, as well as Manual Cinema's *Frankenstein*. The 2020-21 season has continued this winter with virtual content and productions, including *Claws Out: A Holiday Drag Musical*, *F**k7thGrade* by Jill Sobule & Liza Birkenmeier, and the 21st *Young Playwrights Festival*. City Theatre is now announcing four additional virtual productions to round out its season.

“As we reach the one-year mark of Covid-19 and still unable to invite audiences into our theaters on Bingham Street, we’re bringing our next exciting chapter of digital offerings *to* them,” **said Managing Director James McNeel**. “Marc and the artistic staff have curated a collection of original content featuring local artists as well as partnerships with peers from around the country. While nothing can replace the feeling of live performance, this is the safe and responsible approach to help ensure the pandemic is soon behind us.”

“We continue to find new ways to meet our mission, invest in artists, and provide opportunities to nourish hungry audiences,” **said Artistic Director Marc Masterson**. “With this spring season, I am excited to share a mix of digital content that features both local voices as well as collaborators from City Theatre’s history, such as Lauren Gunderson and my dear friends at SITI Company.”

The spring season will begin with **Round House Theatre/Marin Theatre Company**’s production of *The Catastrophist* by **Lauren Gunderson** (*The Revolutionists*, City Theatre 2018). This world premiere theatrical experience is a time-jumping tale based on the life and work of virologist Nathan Wolf. *The Catastrophist* will be available to **stream from March 15-April 4, 2021**.

In the 2000/2001 season, City Theatre presented the world premiere of *ROOM* in collaboration with **SITI Company**. Twenty years later, in a time of introspection and isolation, the film adaptation comes

to Pittsburgh. The stage version of *Room* was adapted by **Jocelyn Clark** and directed by the internationally-renowned theater artist **Anne Bogart**. A one-woman play about the room to move, the room to breathe, and the room to imagine, the show is based on the writings of Virginia Woolf and will be available to **stream starting April 19**.

In May, City Theatre and Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse will partner to produce ***Homegrown Stories 2***. This second iteration of the theaters' collaboration challenges another five local playwrights, with connections to Point Park University, to create 10-minute plays responding to the current moment. The resulting plays will be performed digitally on Tuesday, May 25th at 7:00pm in partnership with **City of Asylum**, streamed on the virtual platform COA @ Home. *Homegrown Stories 2* will feature playwrights **Patrick Cannon, Gab Cody, Kim El, Monteze Freeland, and Molly Rice**.

City Theatre will round out its spring season with a newly-conceived and curated initiative, ***Spotlight***. City Theatre has commissioned six Pittsburgh-based artist/performers to create short digital solo performances celebrating their singular voices. The project will feature works by **Julianne Avolio, Martin Giles, Laurie Klatscher, Treble NLS, LaTrea Rembert, and Bria Walker** and will be released individually online in June.

In addition to these new offerings, City Theatre will also bring back **CT Live**, a monthly Facebook live session with updates on the theater's calendar and programming, featuring special guests from the artistic community. Meanwhile, City Theatre's production of ***F*ck7thGrade***, a world premiere concert film, continues to be available to stream on demand until June 30th.

City Theatre anticipates **announcing its 2021-2022 Season and performance schedule** in late spring or early summer once clarifying re-opening guidelines and rules are provided by regulators and health authorities.

ABOUT THE DIGITAL PRODUCTIONS:

City Theatre Presents

The Catastrophist

By Lauren Gunderson

Directed by Jasson Minadakis

a co-production of Marin Theatre Company and Round House Theatre

March 15 – April 4, 2021

How do you plan for catastrophe? Virologist Nathan Wolfe, named one of *TIME*'s 100 Most Influential People in the World for his work tracking Ebola and swine flu, proposed pandemic insurance years before the novel coronavirus outbreak. No one bought it. Now, in a post-COVID world, we hear his story—presented entirely digitally. *The Book of Will* playwright Lauren Gunderson returns with a time-jumping tale based on the life and work of Nathan Wolfe (who also happens to be her husband). A deep dive into the profundities of scientific exploration and the harrowing realities of facing your own mortality, *The Catastrophist* is a world premiere theatrical experience built of and for this moment in time.

“In Ms. Gunderson’s hands, (the play) sheds compassionate light on the all-too-human tendency to ignore catastrophe until it’s too late.” -- The Economist

Lauren Gunderson's play, *The Revolutionists*, opened City Theatre's 2018-19 season. She is America's most-produced contemporary playwright. Tickets start at \$20 and are available now at CityTheatreCompany.org.

City Theatre Presents

ROOM

Based on the writings of Virginia Woolf

Conceived and Directed by Darron L West

Starring Ellen Lauren

April 19 – May 11, 2021

Based on the SITI Company production of *Room*, directed by Anne Bogart with text by Jocelyn Clarke from the writings of Virginia Woolf, *Room the film* was conceived at the beginning of the pandemic as a desire to reach out from behind the screen. A solo show about the room to move, the room to breathe, the room to imagine. Virginia Woolf wrote with delicacy, humor, anger, outrage, and passion from the point of view of a highly creative woman in the first half of the 20th century. Many of her issues are still contemporary. Sampled from a lifetime of writings by this remarkable artist, *Room* and *Room the film* trace the movement of a creative spirit in exquisite crisis.

Founded in 1992 by Anne Bogart, Tadashi Suzuki, and an ensemble of artists, SITI Company had an occasional home at City Theatre throughout the 1990s, developing such productions as *Room*, *Alice's Adventures*, *The Culture of Desire*, and *The Medium*. In October 2020, it was announced that SITI Company would stop producing shows in 2022 and that it intends to embark on a farewell retrospective of its history.

Homegrown Stories 2

A co-production with Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse

Live Event May 25th - 7:00 PM - Digital recording will be available for four days after the performance.

The Pittsburgh Playhouse and City Theatre Company commissioned five Pittsburgh playwrights to write ten-minute plays for a digital medium in response to our current world. Featuring Patrick Cannon, Gab Cody, Kim El, Monteze Freeland, and Molly Rice. The performance will be streamed on the virtual platform COA @ Home. No charge but reservations required.

Spotlight: Performer Creations

A City Theatre new creative initiative

June

Spotlight celebrates six unique voices and stories that show the artistic spirit is alive and thriving in Pittsburgh.

Featuring short digital performances by Julianne Avolio, Martin Giles, Laurie Klatscher, Treble NLS, LaTrea Rembert, and Bria Walker.

No charge and available through City Theatre's social media channels (Facebook YouTube, etc)

ABOUT CITY THEATRE:

Founded in 1975, City Theatre is in its 46th season as Pittsburgh's home for bold new plays. Located in the historic South Side on its four-building cultural campus, the company produces a season of regional and world premieres; its renowned Young Playwrights Festival, celebrating its 21st year; a season-long reading series of new works in progress; and the annual Momentum Festival. City Theatre's mission is to provide an artistic home for the development and production of contemporary plays of substance and ideas that engage and challenge a diverse audience. With a pre-Covid annual average operating budget of \$3 million, City is the largest performing arts organization not located in Pittsburgh's downtown Cultural District and is a constituent and core member of the League of Resident Theaters (LORT), Theatre Communications Group (TCG), and the National New Play Network (NNPN). Marc Masterson returned as Artistic Director in July 2018, after an 18-year absence, to join Managing Director James McNeel as co-leaders of the organization.

City Theatre has received significant general operating support and/or recent Covid emergency funding from the Allegheny Regional Asset District, The Heinz Endowments, Hillman Family Foundations, Richard King Mellon Foundation, The Pittsburgh Foundation, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and the Shubert Foundation.

ABOUT ROUND HOUSE THEATRE:

ROUND HOUSE THEATRE is one of the leading professional theatres in the Washington, DC, area, producing a season of new plays, modern classics, and musicals for more than 55,000 patrons each year at our 352-seat theatre in Bethesda. Round House has been nominated for more than 197 Helen Hayes Awards and has won more than 37, including four "Outstanding Resident Play" Awards, the "Outstanding Resident Musical Award," and the Charles MacArthur Award for Original New Play in 2016. Round House's lifelong learning and education programs serve more than 5,000 students each year at its Education Center in Silver Spring and in schools throughout Montgomery County. Cornerstone programs include Free Play, which provides free tickets to teens and college students; the year-round Teen Performance Company, which culminates in the student-produced Sarah Metzger Memorial Play; Summer Camp for students in grades K-12; and a full slate of classes for adults and youth.

ABOUT MARIN THEATRE COMPANY:

Marin Theatre Company is the Bay Area's premier mid-sized theatre and the leading professional theatre in the North Bay, producing a six-show season focused on new American plays. MTC is committed to the development and production of new plays, with a comprehensive New Play Program that includes productions of world premieres, readings, and workshops by the nation's best emerging and established playwrights. MTC's numerous education programs serve more than 4,500 students from over 40 Bay Area schools each year. MTC strives to create intimate, powerful and emotional experiences that engage audiences to discuss new ideas and adopt a broader point of view. Marin Theatre Company believe in taking risks and inspiring people to participate in live theatre, regardless of personal means. MTC celebrates the intellectual curiosity of our community and believes that theatre is an important tool to help build empathy. MTC was founded in 1966 and is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

ABOUT THE PITTSBURGH PLAYHOUSE:

The award-winning Pittsburgh Playhouse at Point Park University, reopened in the Fall of 2018 in a new 90,411 square-foot center for arts and entertainment that serves as an artistic laboratory for the prestigious Conservatory of Performing Arts (COPA) and Downtown Pittsburgh's newest home for arts and entertainment. The Playhouse is comprised of professional, artist educators dedicated to an approach to training that enables students to pursue careers as professionals. COPA includes Departments of Theatre, Dance, and Cinema.

The four-story, state of the art facility, located in Downtown Pittsburgh at 350 Forbes Avenue, features the 550-seat PNC Theatre whose backstage and inner workings are visible from the street, resulting in an intentional glimpse into performing arts classes and production; the 200-seat Highmark Theatre; and the 99-seat Rauh Theatre.

The new Pittsburgh Playhouse was designed to be both a learning laboratory for all Point Park students and cultural asset for the community. The Playhouse provides experiential learning opportunities and collaborates with the University's Rowland School of Business and Center for Media Innovation on events, lectures and related programming.

ABOUT SITI COMPANY:

SITI Company is an ensemble-based theater company whose three ongoing components are the creation of new work, the training of young theater artists, and a commitment to international cultural exchange. SITI was founded in 1992 by Anne Bogart, Tadashi Suzuki and a group of like-minded artists to redefine and revitalize contemporary theater in the United States through an emphasis on international collaboration.

Built on the bedrock of ensemble, the company believes that through the practice of collaboration, a group of artists working together over time can have a significant impact on both contemporary theater and the world at large. Through performances, educational programs, and collaborations with other artists and thinkers, SITI Company continues to challenge the status quo, to train to achieve artistic excellence in every aspect of its work, and to offer new ways of seeing and of being as both artists and as global citizens.

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