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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City Theatre presents historically-inspired drama:

THE ROYALE
By Marco Ramirez

January 21 – February 12, 2017

Pittsburgh, PA (December 20, 2016) – **City Theatre** rings in 2017 with ***The Royale***, a knockout new play by **Marco Ramirez**. It is directed by **Stuart Carden**, and runs on City Theatre's **Main Stage, January 21 – February 12, 2017**. Tickets are on sale now.

Jay “The Sport” Jackson is a legend in the making. He has his eyes set on becoming the heavyweight champion of the world, but the Jim Crow reality of 1905 America might just be his fiercest opponent yet. *The Royale* goes ringside for the fight of the century, following one man’s quest for victory against all odds.

The Royale is a heart-pounding drama inspired by the true story of the trail-blazing African American boxer, Jack Johnson. Johnson’s insistence on fighting—and ultimately defeating—the white champion of the time ignited racial tensions and thrust him into an international spotlight.

“I didn’t set out to write a play about race relations,” said **playwright Marco Ramirez**. “I set out to write a play about boxing. But as I started to zero in on the elements I knew I wanted to highlight—the percussive, distinctly musical nature of the sport, the braggadocio of celebrity, the narratives that get spun in and outside of the ring—the story of Jack Johnson kept bubbling to the surface, like a song I couldn’t get out of my head.”

“August Wilson often gets credited as the greatest African American playwright. I’d go a step further. I think he’s the greatest American playwright,” Ramirez continued. “I could never have written *The Royale* without August Wilson’s influence. When I sit to write a new play, it’s his

toolbox I carry with me. The monologue as music. The ghost that walks across the stage. The argument between loved ones in which each party is 100% correct. In his work, there's no such thing as a simple message. There is no moral high ground. There are just human beings born at the wrong time, or into the wrong families, trying to find joy in a world where the only constant is change, yet somehow everything stays the same."

"Marco's play not only brings us deep into the world of professional boxing at the turn of the 20th century, but it also gives us a ringside view of America at that moment in time as well," said **Artistic Director Tracy Brigden**. "It's a play that has real resonance to our present challenges as a nation, but as told through the lens of sports, it makes for a highly entertaining and exciting piece of theatre."

Marco Ramirez has had plays produced at Lincoln Center (Outer Critics Circle Award nomination), The Kennedy Center, The Humana Festival, The Old Globe (San Diego), The Bush Theatre (London), and Center Theatre Group. Honors include Juilliard's Lila Acheson Wallace Playwriting Fellowship, Lincoln Center's Le Comte du Nouy Award, and both WGA and Emmy Award nominations. Education: NYU and Juilliard. TV credits: *Sons of Anarchy* (FX), *Orange is the New Black* (Netflix), *Fear the Walking Dead* (AMC), *Marvel's Daredevil* (Netflix), and *Marvel's The Defenders* (Netflix).

The Royale is directed by **Stuart Carden**. Performing the role of Jay is **Desean Kevin Terry**. The cast includes **Bernard Gilbert** as Fish, **Tim Edward Rhoze** as Wynton, **Andrew William Smith** as Max, **Bria Walker** as Nina, and **Tony II Lorrich** and **Siddiq Saunderson** as members of the Ensemble. The production team includes **Brian Bembridge** (scenic and lighting design), **Karen Gilmer** (costume design), **Mikhail Fiksel** (sound designer), **Clare Drobot** (dramaturg), and **Patti Kelly** (stage manager). **Stephanie Paul** will create the unique soundscape of *The Royale* as Body Percussion Choreographer.

THE ROYALE

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

January 21 – February 12, 2017

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. and/or 7:00 p.m.

Thursdays and Fridays at 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays at 1:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m., and/or 9:00 p.m.

Sundays at 2:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.

For a complete listing of show times, please visit CityTheatreCompany.org or call 412-431-2489.

PRESS / OPENING NIGHT:

Friday, January 27 at 8:00 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Sipping Sunday – Jan. 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Sample wines specially chosen to complement the production.

Sunday Talkbacks – Jan. 29 & Feb. 5

Conversation with the artists immediately following the 2:00 p.m. performances, moderated by City Theatre artistic staff.

Greenroom Young Professionals Night – Friday, Feb. 3 at 8:00 p.m.

\$25 Greenroom ticket includes complimentary snacks, beer, and wine after the performance, and mingling with the cast. Use code GREENROOM when ordering.

Pay-What-You-Want – Saturday, Feb. 4 at 1:00 p.m.

A limited number of tickets are reserved for PWYW and go on sale two hours before curtain, walk up sales only. Call the box office in advance to check on availability.

ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCE DATES:

ASL Interpretation Tuesday, Feb. 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Open Captioning and Audio Description Sunday, Feb. 12 at 2:00 p.m.

WHERE:

City Theatre, 1300 Bingham Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203 (South Side)

Patron parking is available in the lot across from the City Theatre entrance for \$8.

BOX OFFICE:

412.431.CITY (2489) or citytheatrecompany.org

TICKETS:

Single tickets start at \$37.50.

Season subscriptions are still available and three-show packages start at \$99.

DISCOUNTS:

Audiences under 30 may reserve \$15 tickets in advance for all performances except Fridays at 8:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 5:30 p.m.; on Fridays and Saturdays, rush tickets are available two hours prior to show time and based on availability. **Seniors age 62 and older** may purchase \$22 rush tickets at the Box Office beginning two hours before show time, based on availability. **Groups of 10 or more** are eligible for discounts – contact Joel Ambrose at 412.431.4400 x286.

City Theatre is now in its 42nd season. Located in the historic South Side, City Theatre is Pittsburgh's home for bold new plays, commissioning and producing work by playwrights including Daniel Beaty, Jessica Dickey, Christopher Durang, Michael Hollinger, Willy Holtzman, Tarell Alvin McCraney, and Madeleine George. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Tracy Brigden, Managing Director James McNeel, and the Board of Directors, 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. CityTheatreCompany.org

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