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PORTLAND CENTER STAGE ANNOUNCES 2005 – 2006 SEASON

Tuesday, March 1, 2005 – Portland, ORE. For one night only, **PORTLAND CENTER STAGE** Artistic Director **Chris Coleman** returned to Portland from Louisville, where he is directing Allison Moore's *Hazard County* (JAW/West 2004) for the Humana Festival of New American Plays, to announce PCS' 2005 – 2006 season. Last night's audience comprised an invited group of 400 subscribers; local actors and theater artists; and government, business and arts leaders. Coleman introduced PCS' 18th season – its last in the Portland Center for the Performing Arts as it prepares to move into its new home in the Armory in the Fall of 2006 -- with a series of excerpts read from the stage of the Newmark Theatre (N), PCS' 880-seat mainstage where five of next season's seven plays will be produced. The other two plays are part of the Next Stage Series presented in the far more intimate 271-seat Winningstad Theatre (W).

The Next Stage series, launched in the 2003-2004 season, results from Chris Coleman's commitment to producing new work. Two plays produced in that space, Mark Setlock's *Fully Committed* (Spring 2004) and Mike Daisey's *21 Dog Years: Doing Time at Amazon.com* (Winter 2005), have been enormously successful, requiring standby seating and added performances. In fact, *Fully Committed* was so popular, it moved immediately to London for a six-month run. When Mark Setlock returns to PCS in December 2005 with his new project, *This Wonderful Life*, a one-man stage adaptation of the screenplay *It's A Wonderful Life*, the **world premiere** will be produced in the Newmark.

The 2005-2006 season includes a second **world premiere** – Itamar Moses' *Celebrity Row*; three more contemporary plays, Glen Berger's wry *Underneath the Lintel*, Rolin Jones' endearingly imaginative *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* and Regina Taylor's joyful *Crowns*; a stage adaptation of the novel just voted the most romantic of all time, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*; and the musical that captured the eternal innocence of first love, Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt's *The Fantasticks*. The complete 2005 – 2006 season is:

- Glen Berger, *Underneath the Lintel*, September 27 – October 30, 2005 (W)
- Jane Austen adapted by Marcus Goodwin, *Pride and Prejudice*, October 25 – November 20, 2005 (N)
- Conceived by Mark Setlock and adapted for the stage by Steve Murray, *This Wonderful Life* (working title), November 29 – December 24, 2005 (N) -- **World Premiere**
- Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt, *The Fantasticks*, January 10 – February 5, 2006 (N)
- Rolin Jones, *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*, February 14 – March 5, 2006 (N)
- Regina Taylor, *Crowns*, March 14 – April 9, 2006 (N)
- Itamar Moses, *Celebrity Row*, March 21 – April 16, 2006 (W) – **World Premiere**

Just Add Water/West, PCS's annual playwrights' festival that takes place July 8 – 18, 2005 with public readings on July 16/17, bridges the two seasons. In addition, the world premiere of **Glen**

- more -

PCS '04-'05 Season Announcement, Page Two

Berger's *O Lovely Glowworm* (March 22 – April 25, 2005), the runaway hit of JAW/West 2003, closes the 2004-2005 season and his highly acclaimed play, *Undeneath the Lintel*, opens the 2005-2006 season. With the playwright in town for rehearsals of *Glowworm*, he read last night's excerpt from *Undeneath the Lintel* himself. Itamar Moses, another playwright discovered at JAW/West, enjoyed a successful run when his first play, *Outrage*, received its world premiere at PCS in Spring 2003.

The actors reading excerpts for Season Announcement were **Christine Calfas** and **Scott Coopwood** (*Pride and Prejudice*), **Khanh Doan** (*The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*), **Quigley Provost-Landrum** (*Crowns*), **Debera-Ann Ann Lund** (*Celebrity Row*), and **Debbie Hunter** accompanied by pianist **Stephen Alexander** performed "Much More" from *The Fantasticks*. The Announcement also included a slide show of the current season's productions, with photographs by Owen Carey.

Season Announcement prompts current subscribers to be the first to buy tickets for next year, with renewals taken exclusively through May 31. New subscriptions open for sale on June 1 and single tickets go on sale August 1. Subscriptions, available in a wide variety of packages, range from \$66-364. Single tickets range from \$15 (30 and under) to \$20 - \$56, reserved.

In the 2005-2006 season, all second balcony seating in both the Newmark and Winningstad Theatres for all performances will be \$20 in a concerted effort to make the experience of live theater more accessible to all audiences and to cultivate new theatergoers. PCS will continue popular celebrations such as Fade to Black, Girls Night Out and Opening Night Receptions, as well as audience enrichment programs, including Q&As, The Forum, audio-described and sign-interpreted performances.

Now in its seventeenth season, **PORTLAND CENTER STAGE** is a resident company of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, attracting an annual audience of more than 90,000 theatergoers of all ages. With five mainstage and two second stage productions each season, PCS produces a blend of classical, contemporary and world premiere works in addition to its annual summer playwrights festival, Just Add Water/West. PCS has embarked upon a \$32.9 million capital campaign to renovate the historic Portland Armory and create a permanent home for the company. The new facility, which will house a 600-seat mainstage and a 200-seat black box theater, is being designed to be the first historic rehabilitation, and hopes to be the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum rating. To date, more than \$13.7 million has been secured for the project and efforts are underway to open the new Armory Theater in the Fall of 2006. Its 2004 – 2005 season continues with:

- *My Fair Lady*, February 15 – March 12, 2005
- *O Lovely Glowworm, or Scenes of Great Beauty*, March 22 – April 24, 2005 – **World Premiere**