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9/6/06

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GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY OPENS TO THE PUBLIC OCTOBER 1ST

**Portland Center Stage to host a Community Celebration with Live Entertainment,
Local Food, Beer Garden, FREE Tours
and a Sneak Peek at
Inaugural Program, *West Side Story***

September 6, 2006 – PORTLAND After four years of planning and renovation, **Portland Center Stage** welcomes Portland to a **Community Celebration** at its new home, **The Gerding Theater at the Armory** on October first.

Designed to be the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts building in the world, to achieve a **LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification**, The Gerding Theater at the Armory features two state-of-the-art theater venues, a spacious lobby with a café, interactive educational exhibits and environmentally conscious building and operational designs, all within it's historically preserved and seismically upgraded architectural shell. The historic character of the City's second largest 19th century building has been meticulously maintained and revealed in its new design.

To commemorate the re-birth this 115 year old icon of Portland culture, **Portland Center Stage** and **Portland Family of Funds** are hosting the **street party on Davis Street between NW 9th and 11th Avenues, from Noon to 5pm on Sunday, October 1st. Admission to the Celebration is FREE, and food and beverages will be available at modest prices.**

Live entertainment, including a celebratory Chinese Lion Dance, the Last Regiment of Syncopated Drummers and Portland Jazz favorites the Mel Brown B3 organ Band, will entertain from an outdoor stage at the corner of **NW 9th Ave and Davis St.** Several Pearl District restaurants will offer gustatory delights and a beer garden, opposite the stage, will offer comfortable respite, rain or shine. Information booths about historic preservation, sustainable design and community features of the new building will provide answers to the public's burning questions about this new home for **Portland Center Stage.** Guest lecturers on the Armory's history and design will speak during the day.

The new Lobby will be open for the public to explore. Celebrants will be among the first to witness the Interactive Displays by Portland's Second Story Interactive Studios. This is Second Story's first

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comprehensive installation in Portland after many award-winning projects around the US. These displays marry Second Story's technology and storytelling prowess to provide dynamic information about the theater company and its productions, the history of the Armory, the relationship between historic preservation and environmental sustainability, and many donors who have helped make this project a reality.

FREE, ticketed tours of the **Gerding Theater at the Armory** will begin at fifteen minute intervals throughout the afternoon. Several guests at a time will be able to peek in at a rehearsal for the American Musical masterpiece and season opening program, *West Side Story*.

About Portland Center Stage

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE, established in 1988, is Portland's flagship theater company, attracting more than 90,000 theatergoers annually. With five Main Stage and four studio theater productions on the 2006-2007 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 is engaged in a \$36 million capital campaign to renovate the historic Portland Armory and create a permanent home for the company in Portland's Pearl District. The Gerding Theater at the Armory, which will house a 599-seat main stage and a 200-seat black box theater, is designed to be the first historic renovation, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. To date, more than \$26 million has been secured for the project. The new Gerding Theater opens to the public with an all-day celebration on October 1, 2006.

Portland Center Stage 2006-2007 Inaugural Season in the Gerding Theater at the Armory

- *West Side Story* based on a conception of Jerome Robbins; Book by Arthur Laurents; Music by Leonard Bernstein; Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Directed by Chris Coleman, Choreographed by Joel Ferrell, October 3 – November 5, 2006, Main Stage
- *I Am My Own Wife* by Doug Wright, Directed by Victor Pappas, November 7 – December 17, 2006, Studio
- *This Wonderful Life* by Steve Murray, Conceived by Mark Setlock, Directed by Cliff Baker, November 26 – December 24, 2006, Main Stage
- *Misalliance* by George Bernard Shaw, Directed by Chris Coleman, January 9-February 4, 2007, Main Stage
- *Act a Lady* by Jordan Harrison, Directed by Cliff Baker, January 28 – March 11, 2007, Studio
- *The Thugs* by Adam Bock, Directed by Rose Riordan, Feb. 9 – March 10, 2007 (10:30 pm, Friday and Saturday nights only), Studio
- *The Pillowman* by Martin McDonagh, Directed by Rose Riordan, February 18 – March 18, 2007, Main Stage
- *Fences* by August Wilson, Directed by Jonathan Wilson. April 10-May 6, 2007, Main Stage
A co-production with Hartford Stage Company and Dallas Theater Center.
- *Bad Dates* by Theresa Rebeck, Directed by Timothy Near, April 15 – June 10, 2007, Studio