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“WEST SIDE STORY” KICKS OFF PCS 2006-2007 INAUGURAL SEASON IN THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY

Portland Center Stage takes on the biggest production in 18-year history and sings
“There’s a Place for Us!”

AUGUST 25, 2006 - PORTLAND Portland Center Stage is aiming high with the first production of the 2006-2007 inaugural season in the Gerding Theater at the Armory. With a cast of 24 and a live orchestra onstage, PCS presents the American musical masterpiece; *West Side Story*, as it has never been seen here before. Directed by PCS Artistic Director Chris Coleman, the show will remain true to the creative intent of the famous Broadway collaboration of Jerome Robbins, Leonard Bernstein, Arthur Laurents and Stephen Sondheim, but PCS is pulling out all the stops, with a mixture of local and New York talent, to make this the most amazing and most memorable production in its 18-year history.

West Side Story previews at the Gerding Theater **128 NW Eleventh Avenue (at Davis), Tuesday, October 3 - Thursday, October 5; opens Friday, October 6 and closes with the 2 PM matinee on Sunday, November 5.** **All evening performances take place at 7:30 PM** while **Noon Thursday and 2 PM Saturday and Sunday matinee** dates are also available. **Tickets On Sale September 5th: \$18.50, 30+under, \$30 - \$61.50, others; Box Office: 503-445-3700; information: www.pcs.org.** The first production in PCS’ 2006-2007 **Key Private Bank Main Stage** series, *West Side Story* is sponsored by **Gerding/Edlen Development, Hoffman Construction, Ticor Title Insurance, GBD Architects and Helen and Jerry Stern**, with additional support from the **National Endowment for the Arts, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** and the **Regional Arts and Culture Council**.

Tickets are available online at www.pcs.org or by phone at 503-445-3700. After September 12, tickets may be purchased in person at the **new PCS Box Office at 128 NW Eleventh Ave** in the Pearl District, 10am – 5:30pm M-F and Noon to 5:30pm Sat-Sun. **Please note that tickets to Portland Center Stage events are no longer available via Ticketmaster or through the PCPA Ticket Office.**

When it opened on Broadway in 1957, *West Side Story* was an instant phenomenon. Over the past forty-nine years it has been performed by theater companies, drama departments and high schools all over the globe, with the most recent international production being planned for Hanoi, Vietnam.

Selecting this show as the first to be featured on the Main Stage of the new Gerding Theater at the Armory was no easy decision and everyone at PCS, especially Chris Coleman, has been preparing for the challenge for many months. Once the decision to stage *West Side Story* was made, the questions began to flow; questions like, “How do you stage this production without going broke?” “How do you put on an original production of this play and still stay true to the genius that was the original collaboration?” “How can we balance the cast to create the best possible show with a strong contingent of local talent?” They were all asked and they have all been answered. The performance you’ll see at the Gerding Theater has required that everyone at Portland Center Stage bring their best effort to bear and we know audiences will be pleased with the outcome.

One of the most unique aspects of this production is that although the new Gerding Theater at the Armory is fully equipped with an orchestra pit for use in musical productions, the creative decision was made to feature the fourteen-piece orchestra onstage, incorporating them upstage on a platform visible in each and every scene. As great a collaborative and mechanical challenge as this has been to pull off, it promises a more holistic and intimate experience for both the audience and the performers.

The cast of twenty-four is the largest Portland Center Stage has ever assembled for a production. Further, each and every cast member must be an accomplished actor/singer/dancer (aka Triple Threat) in order to cut muster for a show like *West Side Story*. Add that to the looming sense that nearly everyone over the age of fifteen has seen either the play or the movie, and has something to compare individual and ensemble performances to, and you have an idea of the casting challenge facing Mr. Coleman, choreographer, Joel Ferrell and Portland Center Stage. Auditions were held locally and in New York and when casting was complete, the company found we had 5 incredibly strong cast members with Pacific NW roots whose talent sets seamlessly next to the nineteen actors flown-in from the Big Apple. Once again, Portland Center Stage blends the best of who’s local with the best from beyond, living up to the true spirit of regional theater.

The Cast of West Side Story

*Anderson Davis – Tony	*Kent Zimmerman - Pepe
*Carey Brown – Maria	*Chad Michael - Indio
*Ceasar Samayoa – Bernardo	*Oscar Campisi - Anxious
*Ivette Sosa - Anita	*Kristen J. Smith – Velma/Francisca
*Tony Clarno – Riff	Heather White - Jet Girl as Cast
*Ryan Jackson - Action	Anna Kaiser – Graziella
*Scott Sachs – Diesel	*Margot de la Barre - Rosalia
*Tommy Berklund – Baby John	*Courtney Laine Mazza - Consuela
*Aaron Hamilton – Big Deal/Snowboy	Andrew Hickman – Glad Hand/Shrank
Brian Beach – Arab	Danny Bruno – Krupke/Doc
*Amy Palomino – Anybody’s	Dayna Tietzen - Jet/Shark Girl
Matt Caffoni – Chino	*George Nieves - Shark as Cast

West Side Story Creative Team

Directed by Chris Coleman

Choreographer Joel Ferrell	Music Director Rick Lewis
Set Designer G.W. Mercier	Costume Designer Jeff Cone
Lighting Designer Peter Maradudin	Sound Designer Casi Pacilio
Fight Choreographer John Armour	Dialect Coach Theresa Thuman
*Stage Manager Mark Tynan	Assistant Stage Manager Jamie Hill

New York Casting by Harriet Bass and Eileen Duffy

Casting by Rose Riordan

*member of Actors’ Equity Association, the national union for professional actors and stage managers

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West Side Story

Based on a Conception of Jerome Robbins

Book by Arthur Laurents, Music by Leonard Bernstein, Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim,
Entire Original Production Directed and Choreographed by Jerome Robbins,
This Production Directed by Chris Coleman and Choreographed by Joel Ferrell

Portland Center Stage * Gerding Theater at the Armory * 128 NW Eleventh Ave.

Tickets \$18.50 - \$61.50 * **Box Office 503-445-3700** * www.pcs.org

EVENINGS 7:30 PM

Tuesdays Oct. 3(P), 10, 17, 24, 31
Wednesdays Oct. 4(P), 11, 18, 25, Nov. 1
Thursdays Oct. 5(P), 12, 19, 26, Nov. 2
Fridays Oct. 6(O), 13, 20, 27, Nov. 3
Saturdays Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28, Nov. 4
Sundays Oct. 8, 22

MATINEES

Noon with Q&A after show
Thursdays Oct. 12, 19, 26, Nov. 2
2PM
Saturdays Oct. 14, 28, Nov. 4
Sundays Oct. 8, 15, 22, 29, Nov. 5I

(P) = Preview • **(O) = Opening Night** • **I = Closing Matinee**

Student/Senior Matinees

Every Thursday Matinee at Noon is programmed especially for our student and senior audiences.

Patrons enjoy discounted ticket prices and post-show Q&A sessions with the cast and crew of *West Side Story*.

Prologue

Join us for a lively pre-show introduction to the play you are about to see with PCS Literary and Education staff and/or special guests.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, October 10 – November 7

6:30PM Inside the Main Stage Theater

Access Performances

Audio Described

Friday, October 13 7:30 PM

Sign Interpreted

Thursday, October 19 7:30 PM

The Gerding Theater Main Stage is fully accessible for all people with disabilities. Assistive listening devices are available from the coatroom, **free** of charge.

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 in 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 fund the renovation of the historic Portland Armory, our new home in Portland's Pearl District. The Gerding Theater at the Armory houses a 599-seat main stage and a 200-seat black box studio theater, and 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 at the Armory opens to the public with an afternoon celebration on October 1, 2006.

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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, 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, 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

www.pcs.org