

Portland Center Stage at

THE ARMORY

PRESS CONTACT: Claudie Fisher
503.445.3765
claudief@pcs.org

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Portland Center Stage at The Armory's 2018-2019 Season

THE COLOR PURPLE · A LIFE · SENSE & SENSIBILITY · BUYER & CELLAR ·

TINY BEAUTIFUL THINGS · UNTIL THE FLOOD · CROSSING MNISOSE ·

THE BREATH OF LIFE · NATIVE GARDENS ·

A CHRISTMAS MEMORY/WINTER SONG · TWIST YOUR DICKENS

PLUS: The 10th anniversary return engagement of Storm Large in CRAZY ENOUGH



February 20, 2018 — PORTLAND, OR. Portland Center Stage at The Armory's 2018-2019 season will feature 11 productions along with a special 10th anniversary return engagement of Storm Large in *Crazy Enough*, a show that had its world premiere at The Armory in 2009 and became one of the company's biggest hits.

Artistic Director Chris Coleman, who has been at the helm of Portland Center Stage at The Armory for the past 17 years, announced the new season as he prepares to depart the company to become artistic director of Denver Center for the Performing Arts Theatre Company. "With this season announcement," said Coleman, "I offer my gratitude for my time in Portland in the best way that I know how — by working with the fine team at The Armory to craft a new season that is so exciting it makes it difficult to leave. And somewhat to my chagrin, we've managed just that."

"The new season has the largest variety of voices ever presented in one season in our 31 years as

a company,” Coleman continued. “There are more women playwrights than ever before; playwrights from more facets of American culture than ever before; stories told in more unique ways than ever before. Within that, you will see the shared character that has defined our seasons always: compelling stories. From the opening musical based on the work of American master Alice Walker, to the closing comedy from a fresh new American voice, the stories will take you from the drawing rooms of Regency England to a writer’s room in Portland; from the banks of the Missouri River in 1804 to Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014; from the expanse of decades in the Deep South to the blink of a minute in a life in the big city. It will be a breathtaking season.”

Season packages are on sale now! To purchase season tickets, call 503-445-3700 or visit www.pcs.org. The Create Your Own Package starts at \$92.25 for three plays. The U.S. Bank Main Stage Series starts at \$184.50. The Everything Series starts at \$307.50. The eight-admission Flexpass is available for \$450. The new and hugely popular option for those who are 35 years old and younger, The Armory Card, starts at \$100 for five admissions. Groups of 10 or more can sign up for the priority seating list now and purchase tickets to the new season starting on July 2, 2018. Groups that book by August 31 receive 30% off regular ticket prices. Groups receive one free ticket for every 20 tickets purchased. To order group tickets call 503-445-3794 or visit www.pcs.org/groups. Find out more about the 2018-2019 season at www.pcs.org/2018-2019-season. **Those who purchase 2018-2019 season tickets by March 12 will get access to a special private sale to purchase tickets for Storm Large in *Crazy Enough*.**

THE COLOR PURPLE

Based on the novel by Alice Walker

Book by Marsha Norman

Music and Lyrics by Brenda Russell, Allee Willis and Stephen Bray

Directed by Timothy Douglas

September 15 – October 28, 2018 | On the U.S. Bank Main Stage

Opening Night/Press Night: September 21, 2018

From Alice Walker’s Pulitzer Prize-winning bestseller comes a powerful musical with a fresh, joyous score of jazz, ragtime, gospel and blues. This stirring family chronicle follows the inspirational Celie from the early to mid-20th century in the American south, as she journeys from

childhood to womanhood, through joy and despair, anguish and hope to discover the power of love and life. With a soul-rousing, Grammy-winning score, *The Color Purple* is an unforgettable and intensely moving American classic.

- **“A miracle on Broadway; a glory to behold!” – *The New York Times***
- **Tony Award, Best Revival of a Musical, 2016**
- **Grammy Award, Best Musical Theater Album, 2017**

A LIFE

By Adam Bock

Directed by Rose Riordan

September 29 – November 11, 2018 | In the Ellyn Bye Studio

Opening Night/Press Night: October 5, 2018

Nate Martin is hopelessly single. When his most recent breakup, another in a lifelong string of ill-fated matches, casts him into a funk, he turns to the only source of wisdom he trusts: the stars. Poring over astrological charts, he obsessively questions his past and his place in the cosmos. But in Adam Bock's wickedly funny, insightful and disarming new play, the answer he receives, when it comes, is shockingly obvious — and totally unpredictable.

- **West Coast Premiere**
- **Commissioned by Portland Center Stage at The Armory**
- **Developed at JAW: A Playwrights Festival in 2014; debuted Off-Broadway in 2016**
- **“★★★★ Exquisite in detail and throws a jaw-dropping curveball.”**
– *Time Out New York*

A CHRISTMAS MEMORY - paired with -

WINTER SONG *Northwest Stories*

***A Christmas Memory* by Truman Capote**

***Winter Song* by Merideth Kaye Clark and Brandon Woolley**

Directed by Brandon Woolley

November 24 – December 30, 2018 | In the Ellyn Bye Studio

Opening Night/Press Night: November 30, 2018

A Christmas Memory is an autobiographical recollection of Truman Capote's rural Alabama

boyhood. This tiny gem of a holiday story offers an unforgettable portrait of an odd but enduring friendship between two innocent souls, “one young and one old” and their shared memories of beloved holiday rituals. To accompany this tale, the brilliant singer Merideth Kaye Clark (*Fiddler on the Roof* and *The Last Five Years* at The Armory, *Wicked* national tour) and director Brandon Woolley created *Winter Song*, an original presentation of favorite songs that celebrate winter and all it represents: love, loss, family, solitude, renewal and friendship.

- **“This show is like comfort food — warm, nourishing, and just exactly what you want on a cold winter’s night.” – *Broadway World***

THE SECOND CITY’S A CHRISTMAS CAROL:

TWIST YOUR DICKENS

By Peter Gwinn and Bobby Mort

Directed by Ron West

November 27 – December 23, 2018 | On the U.S. Bank Main Stage

Opening Night/Press Night: November 30, 2018

A complete send-up of the holiday classic, this adult comedy is adorned with the improvisational genius of the legendary comedy troupe The Second City. *Twist* includes zany holiday sketches and uproarious improv based on audience participation — it’s never the same show twice! It has become a Portland favorite and returns for the holidays in 2018. As the show’s fans know, the comedy whizzes from The Second City update the show every year. So come back for your favorite moments and enjoy the new surprises in store.

- **“Amusing for the whole family.” – *Portland Monthly***

SENSE & SENSIBILITY

By Kate Hamill

Based on the novel by Jane Austen

Directed by Eric Tucker

January 12 – February 10, 2019 | On the U.S. Bank Main Stage

Opening Night/Press Night: January 18, 2019

This exuberant, innovative staging of Jane Austen’s classic satire follows the adventures (and misadventures) of the Dashwood sisters — sensible Elinor and hypersensitive Marianne — after

their sudden loss of fortune. Bursting with humor, emotion and bold theatricality, *Sense & Sensibility* asks: When reputation is everything, how do you follow your heart? Director Eric Tucker and adaptor Kate Hamill of the acclaimed New York theater company Bedlam revive their production in Portland after celebrated runs in New York and Boston.

- **“Jane Austen is alive and well and rolling on casters.” – *The Boston Globe***

BUYER & CELLAR

By Jonathan Tolins

Directed by Brandon Woolley

January 19 – March 3, 2019 | In the Ellyn Bye Studio

Opening Night/Press Night: January 25, 2019

Buyer & Cellar is an outrageous comedy about the price of fame, the cost of things, and the oddest of odd jobs. Alex, a struggling actor in Los Angeles, finds himself working in a shopping mall — but this isn't your regular shopping center. In his most challenging role yet, Alex plays the shop boy bargaining with Barbra Streisand in her own private basement mall. With riotously sharp wit, Alex awaits a visit from the ultimate customer, the “Funny Girl” herself. Nick Cearley (Seymour in *Little Shop of Horrors*) returns to The Armory as Alex.

- **Fun Fact! What happens in this play is fiction but Barbra Streisand's private shopping mall — with its doll store, clothing boutique and sweet shop — actually exists.**
- **“With all the comedy and all the wit in Mr. Tolins’s writing, *Buyer & Cellar* is also notable for its heart.” – *The New York Times***

Northwest Stories

TINY BEAUTIFUL THINGS

Based on the book by Cheryl Strayed

Adapted by Nia Vardalos

Co-conceived by Marshall Heyman, Thomas Kail and Nia Vardalos

Directed by Rose Riordan

February 23 – March 31, 2019 | On the U.S. Bank Main Stage

Opening Night/Press Night: March 1, 2019

Renowned Portland author Cheryl Strayed (*Wild*) had a secret life as the anonymous online advice

columnist for “Dear Sugar.” Over the years, thousands of people turned to Sugar for words of wisdom, honesty and hope. At first unsure of herself, Sugar found a way to weave her own life experiences together with the deep yearning and heartrending problems of her readers. The beloved column ultimately became a celebration of the simple beauty and light at the heart of being human. Strayed captured this journey in her book *Tiny Beautiful Things*. Adapted for the stage by the Academy Award-nominated writer of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, Nia Vardalos, and a hit at the Public Theater in New York last season, *Tiny Beautiful Things* is a funny and touching exploration of emotion, vulnerability and human resilience.

· **“A heart-tugging, emotionally rewarding evening.” – *The Huffington Post***

UNTIL THE FLOOD

By Dael Orlandersmith

Directed by Neel Keller

March 16 – April 21, 2019 | In the Ellyn Bye Studio

Opening Night/Press Night: March 22, 2019

In the aftermath of the riots in Ferguson, Missouri, sparked by the killing of Michael Brown, celebrated writer, performer and Pulitzer Prize-finalist Dael Orlandersmith (*Forever*) traveled to the region and interviewed people from all walks of life. From these conversations, she crafted a stunning piece that reflects the complexity of St. Louis and beyond. Orlandersmith’s play is a mosaic of voices that tells the region’s story without advancing any one viewpoint above others, and asks that we listen to our fellow citizens in our own efforts to better understand today’s America. Originally commissioned by the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, *Until the Flood* premiered to acclaim in New York City in January of 2018.

· **“Portraying only eight people — nine if you include her own alter ego — she nevertheless brings the questions, the pain and even the unspeakable thoughts of hundreds, if not millions, to life. *Until the Flood* is an urgent moral inquest.” – *The New York Times***

Northwest Stories

CROSSING MNISOSE

By Mary Kathryn Nagle

Directed by Molly Smith

April 13 – May 5, 2019 | On the U.S. Bank Main Stage

Opening Night/Press Night: April 19, 2019

Crossing Mnisose tells the story of one of America's first feminists, Sacajawea. Today, her face sits on the dollar coin and there are more statues of her in the United States than any other woman. But very few know her story, or the violence she endured as she guided the U.S. Corps of Discovery up the Mnisose (or what Europeans named the "Missouri River"). In 2017, the contemporary successor to the Corps of Discovery, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, granted an easement to allow a pipeline to cross the very same river. Although 212 years separate these controversial crossings, both reveal the continued survival of Tribal Nations in the face of colonial conquest. By award-winning playwright Mary Kathryn Nagle (*Sovereignty, Manhatta*), *Crossing Mnisose* draws a line from a completely original view of Lewis and Clark's historic encampment at Fort Mandan to the present day, as descendants of the Dakota and Lakota Nations of the Mnisose continue their fight to ensure that the Mnisose, and the lands that contain the burials of their ancestors, are preserved for future generations.

- ***Northwest Stories World Premiere***
- **Commissioned by Portland Center Stage at The Armory**

THE BREATH OF LIFE

By David Hare

Directed by TBA

May 4 – June 16, 2019 | In the Ellyn Bye Studio

Opening Night/Press Night: May 10, 2019

Frances was the dutiful wife of Martin. Madeleine was his not-so-dutiful mistress of 25 years. When Martin moves to America with a younger woman, the two women he left behind meet face to face for the first time, to discuss their relationships with the elusive man who profoundly impacted them, but never defined them. Together they explore the past and learn to feel the breath of life again. The Armory production will feature Portland favorites Sharonlee McLean (*The Receptionist, Vanya, Sonya, Masha and Spike*, and 23 other productions at The Armory) as Frances and Gretchen Corbett (Nurse Ratched in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*) as Madeleine.

- **“The play is one of Hare’s finest ... bitingly funny and often deeply affecting.”**
– ***The Daily Telegraph***

NATIVE GARDENS

By Karen Zacarías

Directed by TBA

May 18 – June 16, 2019 | On the U.S. Bank Main Stage

Opening Night/Press Night: May 24, 2019

You can't choose your neighbors, but you can choose your side of the fence. In this brilliant new comedy, cultures and gardens clash, turning well-intentioned neighbors into feuding enemies. A rising attorney, Pablo, and doctoral candidate Tania, his very pregnant wife, have just purchased a home next to Frank and Virginia, a well-established D.C. couple with a prize-worthy English garden. But an impending barbecue for Pablo's colleagues and a delicate disagreement over a long-standing fence line soon spirals into an all-out border dispute, exposing both couples' notions of race, taste, class and privilege.

- ***"Native Gardens is a true breath of comic fresh air." – DC Theatre Scene***

Northwest Stories

CRAZY ENOUGH

Written and Performed by Storm Large

June 25 – June 30, 2019 | On the U.S. Bank Main Stage

Special 10th anniversary limited engagement run!

Crazy Enough was developed at JAW: A Playwrights Festival in 2008 and had its world premiere at The Armory in 2009. It became one of the biggest hits in Portland Center Stage at The Armory's history — playing for a record sold-out 21-week run in the Ellyn Bye Studio — and audiences have been clamoring for its return ever since. This 10th anniversary special return engagement is playing for a limited eight-performance run. A private sale will start March 12 and be available exclusively for 2018-2019 season ticket holders.

- ***"An empowering look at how one woman has managed, despite repeated heartaches and screw-ups, to stay aware of the preciousness of life." – The Oregonian***
- ***"I need to thank you for one of the great nights in the theater that I have ever had. Storm Large is a force of nature, a truth teller, a comedian, a story-teller and one of the most brilliant voices I have ever heard." – Daniel Stern, actor (*Diner, Breaking Away*)***

NORTHWEST STORIES

Portland Center Stage at The Armory's Northwest Stories series is a celebration of the essence of the region, offering plays that examine our culture and ignite dialogue about the events – and the places – that define the Northwest. From fresh looks at history to dynamic explorations of contemporary culture, Northwest Stories blends adventurous storytelling with local impact, all created with the immediacy and vibrancy that only live performance can bring. The 2017-2018 season brought two Northwest Stories world premieres to the stage: *Astoria: Part Two* and *Winter Song*. The 2018-2019 season's Northwest Stories offerings include the world premiere of Mary Kathryn Nagle's *Crossing Mnisose*, commissioned by Portland Center Stage at The Armory in 2016, as well as Cheryl Strayed's *Tiny Beautiful Things*, the return of *Winter Song*, and the special engagement of Storm Large in *Crazy Enough*.

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE AT THE ARMORY

[Portland Center Stage at The Armory](#) is the largest theater company in Portland and among the top 20 regional theaters in the country. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the company became independent in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since 2000. An estimated 150,000 visitors attend The Armory annually to enjoy a mix of classical, contemporary and world premiere productions, along with a variety of high quality education and community programs. Eleven productions are offered each season, in addition to roughly 400 community events created — in partnership with 170+ local organizations and individuals — to serve the diverse populations in the city. As part of its dedication to new play development, the company has produced 26 world premieres and presents an annual new works festival, JAW: A Playwrights Festival. Home to two theaters, The Armory was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

SEASON SUPPORTERS

The current season is funded in part by Season Superstars Tim and Mary Boyle and Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank. Further support comes from the following Season Sponsors: Regional Arts and Culture Council; The Wallace Foundation; Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded

by the state of Oregon; and the National Endowment for the Arts. Mark Spencer Hotel is the official hotel partner for the company. Portland Center Stage at The Armory was selected as a participant of the Wallace Foundation's [Building Audiences for Sustainability Initiative](#), a four-year effort with a nationwide cohort of 26 performing arts organizations.

###