

Portland Center Stage at

**THE ARMORY**  
PRESENTS

*A Christmas Memory*

By Truman Capote

-paired with-

*Winter Song*

By Merideth Kaye Clark & Brandon Woolley

Directed by Brandon Woolley

November 18 - December 31, 2017

In the Ellyn Bye Studio

Artistic Director | Chris Coleman

# *A Christmas Memory*

By Truman Capote  
-paired with-

## *Winter Song*

By Merideth Kaye Clark & Brandon Woolley

**Directed by Brandon Woolley**

Music Director  
Mont Chris Hubbard

Scenic Designer  
Daniel Meeker

Costume Designer  
Paula Buchert

Lighting Designer  
Sarah Hughey

Sound Designer  
Casi Pacilio

Stage Manager  
Janine Vanderhoff

Production Assistant  
Jordan Affeldt

**Featuring Merideth Kaye Clark & Leif Norby**  
**Accompanied by Mont Chris Hubbard**

**Original Underscore Music by Mont Chris Hubbard**  
**Arrangements by Merideth Kaye Clark & Mont Chris Hubbard**

**Performed without intermission.**

The Actors and Stage Manager in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Videotaping or other photo or audio recording is strictly prohibited.

## A LETTER FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

“On this, the longest night of the year, we welcome the return of the light.” This came as a card from an actress I was working with some 10 years ago, and I’d never heard the winter solstice called out in such elegant fashion. It is with good reason that, for centuries, people have celebrated this moment in our year with festivals and dancing: it can get hard in the middle of the darkness to believe the light will ever find its way back to us.

So this year, we begin what we hope will become a tradition of celebrating this particular moment in the year together: by looking back. First, with Truman Capote’s exquisite short memoir of his dearest friend in the Deep South of his youth and their giddy anticipation of celebrating Christmas together. And then, with a journey in song through the longings and heartaches that find their way into our minds at this time of year.

*-Chris Coleman*

## STORY AND SONG: MEET THE ARTISTS BEHIND OUR WINTER OFFERING

*Interviews by Claudie Jean Fisher, Public Relations and Publications Manager*

Merideth Kaye Clark and Brandon Woolley first collaborated on Clark’s performances of Joni Mitchell’s album *BLUE*, which debuted in this space in 2015. They’ve teamed up once again to create *Winter Song* for this world premiere run paired with Truman

Capote's beloved holiday gem, *A Christmas Memory*, which Woolley is also directing.

**Brandon Woolley:**

**How did the pairing of *A Christmas Memory* and *Winter Song* come about?** *A Christmas Memory* was performed at this theater in the early aughts. It was an audience favorite and a story that people have been asking for again and again. However, it's not quite long enough for a full meal deal. So we were actively looking for something to pair it with during season planning. Someone suggested a collaboration with Merideth Kaye Clark. From there we brought Merideth in and started brainstorming.

**What has the development process been like so far for *Winter Song*?** One of the key points of the process was a workshop we had in June. It was completely eye-opening and so helpful. We were able to have all the collaborators in the room to try new ideas each day. New songs, new scenes, new structure. We needed to pare it down and get back to the heart of what we were after. Community, connection, conversation. From the workshop we threw a lot out. Kept some. And listened to more songs. We polled friends, families and strangers for their memories of winter. And then we carefully put it all back together.

**Truman Capote's *A Christmas Memory* was published in 1956 and has since been adapted for television, film, and was even turned into an opera. What is it about this story that is so enduring?** I think it's about relationships. The closeness and friendship portrayed in the story. Nostalgia and memory. Thinking back on a simpler time, like trying to make homemade presents for those you love. Relishing the time you have with friends and family.

**Last season, you directed *Mary's Wedding* in this space and also celebrated a wedding of your own. What are some of the wintertime activities that you and your husband are looking forward to this year?** Sean and I are just starting to create our own traditions. One of the things we've done the past few years is host a Holiday Cocktail Party and then on Christmas Day we get together with Sean's family and have AlcoHolidays, where each couple brings a cocktail recipe and makes it for the whole family. It's boozy and festive and SO MUCH FUN. We are also going to return to our wedding venue (Edgefield!) on Christmas Eve this year.

**This season is Portland Center Stage at The Armory's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. What is one of your favorite memories of this company?** Working on *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* in my first season. I had just transitioned from being an intern to company manager and was able to assistant direct the show under Rose Riordan. It was such a tricky play, and I just loved being in the room to help figure it all out. It's a show that I think back on and still get chills. From the set to the actors to the lessons learned. It had a profound impact on me.

**Merideth Kaye Clark:**

**What was it about the winter season that appealed to you as a source of inspiration?** Winter is the most emotionally complicated season. The music that it inspires is rich. There are, of course, holiday songs. But we were more interested in the music that captures other winter feelings. Traveling home or hunkering down in the cold. The loneliness and isolation the darkness brings. The gatherings of families and communities. The first day of winter, the

solstice, is the shortest and darkest of the whole year. From there, every day is longer and brighter than the one before. Knowing that, feeling that, brings hope.

**What discoveries have been the most surprising throughout the development process?** Everyone has their own specific history and idea of what this time of year means to them. It has been interesting and challenging to honor that and keep focused. However, even though the memories we have cultivated are all so different, I am surprised by how similar, how universal, the feelings they evoke are.

**One of the songs you perform in this show is an E. E. Cummings poem that you set to music. How did you land on that poem? Did the original music come naturally?** A couple of years ago I was asked by a friend to set a poem to music to be part of a collection of songs inspired by the soprano Rebecca Luker. My contribution was a song set to E. E. Cummings' "i carry your heart with me (i carry it in my heart)." Composing that song reignited my love for Cummings' poetry. I re-read "little tree" a few winters ago and the music came in an afternoon, easily. Like it had always been written but never performed. [Music Director] Mont Chris and I worked on this new arrangement over the summer, oddly, on one of the hottest days of the year. I am tickled I get to perform an original composition in this show.

**What are some of the wintertime activities you are looking forward to this year with your husband and two daughters?** I just bought a new sled. Maybe there'll be some snow again this year? I love baking and sharing treats. The corner where our Christmas tree lives seems empty all year until we get the new one

and decorate it. I am looking forward to cozy Saturday mornings and wearing pajamas with a fire in the fireplace.

**What is one of your favorite memories of working at The Armory?** Watching the Bottle Dance in *Fiddler on the Roof*! I was playing Tzeitl and I had a seat right in the front facing the dancers. The cast was in suspense every night, hopeful the dancers could balance the bottles to the end. Seeing the wood chips flying and the dancers spinning is still one of my favorite theatrical memories.

## BIOGRAPHIES

### **Truman Capote**

#### **Author of *A Christmas Memory***

Truman Capote (September 30, 1924-August 25, 1984) was born in New Orleans, LA. He was a novelist, journalist, screenwriter, playwright and celebrated man-about-town. Early writings include his novel of alienated youth, *Other Voices, Other Rooms* (1948); a collection of Gothic short stories, *A Tree of Night and Other Short Stories* (1949); and the tender novel *The Grass Harp* (1951), which Capote adapted into a play that debuted on Broadway in 1952. The novella *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1958; film adaptation by George Axelrod released in 1961) introduced the charming, hedonistic Holly Golightly as a heroine. Childhood reflections formed the basis of two short stories, *A Christmas Memory* (1956) and *The Thanksgiving Visitor* (1968). Capote's groundbreaking novel *In Cold Blood* (1966) was a pioneering work in the true crime genre and the basis for three film adaptations, including the 2005 film *Capote*, starring Philip Seymour Hoffman. Other works include *The*

*Dogs Bark: Public People and Private Places* (1973) and *Answered Prayers*, an unfinished novel, published posthumously in 1987.

## **Merideth Kaye Clark**

### **Performer**

### **Co-Creator of *Winter Song***

Merideth Kaye Clark has played definitive leading theatrical roles nationwide, such as Elphaba in the First National Tour of *Wicked*, Eva Perón in *Evita* (Northern Stage), Nancy in *Oliver!* (5th Avenue Theatre), and has originated roles in two Off-Broadway musicals. Clark is a sought after concert artist described as "plain astonishing" and "a masterful performer" with "powerhouse pipes." She is a multi-instrumentalist and plays anything with strings, most notably the guitar, dulcimer and viola. Her solo album *Young Stellar Object* garnered critical praise from New York theater reviewers and the studio recording of her acclaimed Joni Mitchell's *BLUE* concert was successfully funded on Kickstarter in only four days. Portland credits include: Cathy, *The Last Five Years* (The Armory); Tzeitl, *Fiddler on the Roof* (The Armory); Clara, *The Light in the Piazza* (Portland Playhouse); and Lilli/Kathryn, *Kiss Me Kate* (Clackamas Repertory Theatre). Many thank yous to everyone who helped create this show!

## **Leif Norby**

### **Performer**

Leif was last seen in *Wild and Reckless, Astoria: Part One* and *The Oregon Trail*. Other appearances at The Armory include: Professor Willard/Joe Stoddard in *Our Town*, De Guiche in *Cyrano*, Rodrigo in *Othello*, ensemble in both *Anna Karenina* and *Sunset Boulevard*, Richard Hannay in *The 39 Steps*, Tateh in *Ragtime*, and Benny Southstreet in *Guys and Dolls*. Other recent Portland appearances



include: Cervantes in *Man of La Mancha* (Lakewood Theatre Company), Dr. Givings in *In the Next Room* (Profile Theatre), Tom in *The God Game* (Brandon Woolley prod.), Bastion in *Mr. Kolpert* and Jane/Edgar in *Mystery of Irma Vep* (Third Rail Repertory Theatre), Verne/George in *And So It Goes...* and Frank Keller in *Red Herring* (Artists Repertory Theatre), Charlie in *The Scene* (Portland Playhouse) and Beast in *Beauty and the Beast* (Pixie Dust). TV credits include *Portlandia* and *Leverage*. Leif is a proud member of Actors' Equity, sends love to his wife Susie, and thanks you for supporting live theater.

## **Brandon Woolley**

### **Director**

#### **Co-Creator of *Winter Song***

Brandon is a director and producer in Portland, Oregon. He is so grateful for the opportunity to collaborate and work on two productions in one this holiday season. Directing credits include: *Mary's Wedding* and *Sex with Strangers* (The Armory); *Luna Gale* (spring, 2018), *International Falls* and *The Few* (CoHo Productions); *The God Game* (self-produced); *The End of Sex* (Theatre Vertigo); *Dial M for Murder* (Bag&Baggage Productions). Brandon has worked on multiple shows at The Armory as an assistant director (*Astoria: Part One* and the upcoming *Part Two*, *LIZZIE*, *The Whipping Man*, *Red*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *A Christmas Story*). He has also collaborated with Michael Curry and Oregon Symphony on *Persephone*, which will travel to Seattle in the spring, Third Rail Repertory Theatre, Broadway Rose Theatre Company and Live On Stage. Brandon is the producing associate and JAW co-producer at Portland Center Stage at The Armory. Much love to Sean.

## **Mont Chris Hubbard**

### **Music Director/Accompanist**

Mont Chris Hubbard is a Portland performer, composer and music director. He is the creator and host of Portland's most endearingly-strange variety show, *The Mont Chris Hubbard Bonus Show*, and hosts a monthly late night piano bar at Artists Repertory Theatre. He has released five CDs of solo piano improvisations and is excited for the opportunity to create the musical palette (not improvised!) for *A Christmas Memory*. He is pleased to work with Brandon Woolley and Leif Norby again, and positively chuffed to collaborate with Merideth Kaye Clark again and again and again and again. He is a proud member of the American Federation of Musicians, the union of professional musicians, and a proud supporter of the labor movement. Find out more at [montchrishubbard.com](http://montchrishubbard.com).

## **Daniel Meeker**

### **Scenic Designer**

Previously at The Armory: lighting for *Lauren Weedman Doesn't Live Here Anymore* and *Wild and Reckless*; scenery for *The People's Republic of Portland* and *Red* (Drammy Award); and set and lighting for *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *The Typographer's Dream*, *LIZZIE* (Drammy Award for Best Lighting), *The Last Five Years* and *The Mountaintop*. Recent projects: *Big Night Out*, *Così fan tutte*, *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* and *The Little Match Girl Passion* (Portland Opera); *The Talented Ones* (Artists Repertory Theatre); *The Language Archive* (Portland Playhouse); *Judy Moody and Stink: The Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Treasure Hunt* (Oregon Children's Theatre); *26 Hours* (Profile Theatre); *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Pioneer Theatre Company); *How I Learned What I Learned* and *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Portland Playhouse); *The*

*How and The Why* (COHO Productions); and lighting director for the Pickathon festival. Daniel is a graduate of Ithaca College and The Yale School of Drama, and a member of United Scenic Artists.

## **Paula Buchert**

### **Costume Designer**

Paula has been employed as a cutter/drafter in the costume shop for Portland Center Stage at The Armory for the past 15 seasons. She has also had the privilege of creating garments for singers, dancers and actors at such venues as Seattle Opera, American Players Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Glimmerglass Opera, Pacific Northwest Ballet, The Shakespeare Theatre and Portland Opera. She holds a degree in Fine Arts with a theater emphasis from the University of Wisconsin, as well as a degree in Fashion Design with a lingerie emphasis from the Fashion Institute of Technology. Paula lives in North Portland with her five companion house rabbits. This is her first design project at The Armory. She would like to thank her family for their love, support and encouragement.

## **Sarah Hughey**

### **Lighting Designer**

Sarah Hughey is proud to make her debut at The Armory. Design credits include Blair Thomas & Co., Steppenwolf Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, City Theatre (Pittsburgh), Kansas City Repertory Theatre, St. Louis Black Repertory Company, Writers' Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Victory Gardens, and many little rooms across Chicago. Upcoming projects include *Major Barbara* (The Armory) and *Lifeboat* (Corrib Theatre w/ Northwest Children's Theatre). Ms. Hughey is the recipient of a Joseph Jefferson Award and the Michael Maggio Emerging Designer Award at the Merrit Awards for Design and Collaboration. She has taught lighting

design at Northwestern University, Columbia College Chicago and Willamette University. She holds an M.F.A. from Northwestern University and is a member of USA Local 829. Ms. Hughey lives in Portland. [skhugheyighting.com](http://skhugheyighting.com)

## **Casi Pacilio**

### **Sound Designer**

Casi's home base is The Armory, where recent credits include *Lauren Weedman Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, *Wild and Reckless*, *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, *The Oregon Trail*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Great Expectations*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Three Days of Rain*; *A Small Fire*, *Constellations* and *Chinglish* with composer Jana Crenshaw; and 11 seasons of JAW. National shows: Holcombe Waller's *Surfacing* and *Wayfinders*; *Left Hand of Darkness*, *My Mind is Like an Open Meadow* (Drammy Award, 2011), *Something's Got Ahold Of My Heart* and *PEP TALK* for Hand2Mouth Theatre. Other credits include Squonk Opera's *Bigsorgasbord-WunderWerk* (Broadway, PS122, national and international tours); *I Am My Own Wife*, *I Think I Like Girls* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Playland*, *10 Fingers* and *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* (City Theatre, PA). Film credits include *Creation of Destiny*, *Out of Our Time* and *A Powerful Thang*. Imagineer/maker of the Eat Me Machine, a dessert vending machine.

## **Janine Vanderhoff**

### **Stage Manager**

Janine is glad to be back for her third season at The Armory. Previous credits at The Armory include: *Wild and Reckless*, *Lauren Weedman Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, *The Santaland Diaries*, *The Oregon Trail*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, JAW, *Great Expectations*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Our Town*. Other Portland credits include

Portland Opera's *Sweeney Todd* (followspot caller); DC Copeland's *Play* (stage manager/production manager); Portland Playhouse's *How to End Poverty in 90 Minutes* and *The Other Place* (stage manager). Touring stage management credits include: *The Graduate* (starring Morgan Fairchild), *Cats*, *The Vagina Monologues*, *Jekyll & Hyde* and *Show Boat*. While in New York, Janine had the opportunity to work on *The Lion King* on Broadway, as well as with many Off-Broadway and regional companies. Production management credits include: *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* for "Democalypse 2012 Republican National Convention" (Tampa, FL); Straz Center (Tampa, FL); The Fox Theatre (Atlanta, GA). Proud NYU graduate and AEA member.

### **Jordan Affeldt**

#### **Production Assistant**

Jordan is a stage manager from the small mountain town of Julian, CA. She completed her bachelor's degree at Northern Arizona University, majoring in theater studies and psychology. Her recent work includes a stage management internship at Pacific Conservatory Theatre (PCPA), where she assistant stage managed *Beauty and the Beast*, *Lend Me a Tenor* and *You Can't Take It With You*. Prior to PCPA, she completed stage management internships with The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and ion theatre company. She spends her free time playing and writing music in the Portland area.

## **SPONSOR STATEMENT**

### **Judy Carlson Kelley**

I am looking forward to watching and supporting *A Christmas Memory* at The Armory. This production will remind us of Truman

Capote's rare ability to describe events — this time, Christmas — through a child's eyes.

## LEAD CORPORATE CHAMPION

### **Umpqua Bank**

Actors take chances. Sometimes they work. Sometimes they don't. But none of these actors would be on stage tonight without taking chances. It's part of growth, and we're all made to grow. That's why we're such a proud supporter of Portland Center Stage. Let this performance inspire you to take the chances that power your own growth.